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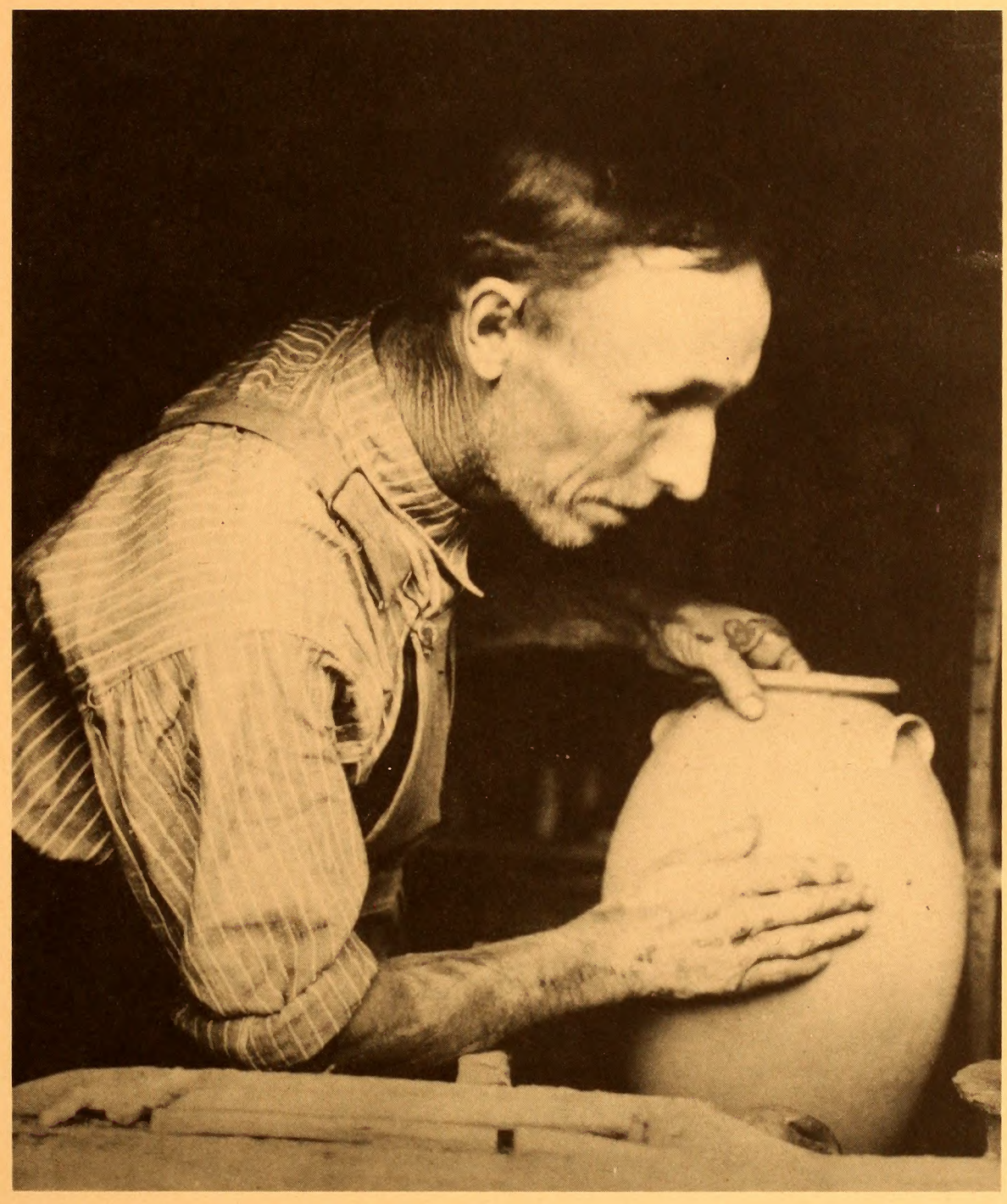
The Mountain Potters of Buncombe County, North Carolina:
An Archaeological and Historical Study



by
Linda F. Carnes-McNaughton

North Carolina Archaeological Council
Publication No. 26

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ABSTRACT

An archaeological and historical survey was conducted on traditional pottery manufacturing sites located in Buncombe County, North Carolina. The twenty-two week project took place during Spring and Summer of 1989 and involved two weeks of archival research, ten weeks of fieldwork, six weeks of analysis and report preparation, and two weeks of summation work. The primary purpose of the survey was to research, inspect, test, and assess the pottery sites in order to determine their eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Ten pottery manufacturing sites were located and researched, and eight were selected for archaeological investigations based on their presumed subsurface integrity and potential. Archaeological investigation consisted of site mapping with a transit, pedestrian surface collecting, and excavations of test units across the site. In summary, three sites yielded subsurface kiln remains, and all sites combined produced over 11,000 artifacts. The information and artifacts recovered from this study provide valuable insight into a century of lifestyles and pottery manufacturing activities by Buncombe County folk potters which began in the mid-1800s.

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I wish to acknowledge the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) of Asheville and Buncombe County, and the Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History (DAH), who served as co-sponsors of this Certified Local Government Grant. Overall project administration was guided by Doug Swaim of the HRC. Archaeologist David Moore, DAH, served as Project Specialist. I would like to express my considerable appreciation to these two individuals and other members of their agencies who had input into this project. Valuable references were generously shared by several informants during the course of the project. These individual researchers were Rodney Leftwich, Deena Dillingham, Blanche Robertson, Opal Barnes, and Mary Hutchinson. During the project, numerous intact pieces of Buncombe County pottery were examined and photographed from private collections and antique shops. I wish to thank Doug and Jane Penland, Ally Goodwin, Gene Wilkerson, Loretta Wilson, Dry Ridge Museum, Vance Birthplace State Historic Site, Bailey Lankford, Rodney Leftwich, Edra Presnell, William and Audie Pressley, Opal Barnes, Sue Macelroy, Richard Walker, and Mary Hutchinson for graciously allowing me access to their pottery collections.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

During the mid-nineteenth century a few traditional potters first moved into the valleys of Buncombe County and established their own pottery manufactories. Most of the potters who moved into the mountainous region near Asheville came from other regions of the state (or from other neighboring states) where pottery production had already been established. Some originated from Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina, or the Catawba Valley region of North Carolina (Zug 1981:17). The potters brought with them the skills, technology, and vessel designs developed from ceramic traditions of these other regions. Once transplanted in their new region, temporal and material modifications of local resources by the potters soon developed into the Buncombe County ceramic tradition, unique by its own elements. All potters were predominately stoneware manufacturers, supplemented by the production of earthenwares (terra cottas) used for agricultural or horticultural purposes.

By the late 1800s to early 1900s two communities surrounding Asheville became pottery production centers (Figure 1). Several potteries were located near the small town of Candler, south of Asheville. The other center was located in and around the town of Weaverville, north of Asheville. The availability of natural resources (clays, water, land, and wood for fuel) in these two areas, the stability of established communities (with ample consumers for their goods), and perhaps, kinship ties were the primary factors behind these new pottery centers.

This report will present the results of a systematic archaeological and historical survey conducted at ten selected pottery sites located in Buncombe County. On April 24, 1989, a $14,000 Certified Local Government grant was awarded to the Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County (henceforth referred to as HRC) by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, (henceforth referred to as DAH) through funds provided by the National Park Service. The purpose of the project was to conduct archaeological investigations at the original sites of Buncombe County pottery manufactories. This research grant called for a 20-week project schedule including two weeks of background historical research, 10 weeks of fieldwork, and eight weeks of report preparation and summation work. Project objectives called for archaeological survey and testing at two to four of the six known pottery sites depending on availability and accessibility. As it happened, the location of 10 pottery sites were discovered (or rediscovered), and permission was obtained to excavate at each. Due to time limitations, personnel, and funding, however, the 10 sites were ranked according to their archaeological potential. This reevaluation narrowed the list to eight sites, the results of which will be forthcoming.

Personnel involved with this project included Doug Swaim, HRC Project Coordinator, David Moore, DAH Project Specialist, and the author as Principal Investigator. All field and lab assistance was provided by a team of volunteers, local and regional.

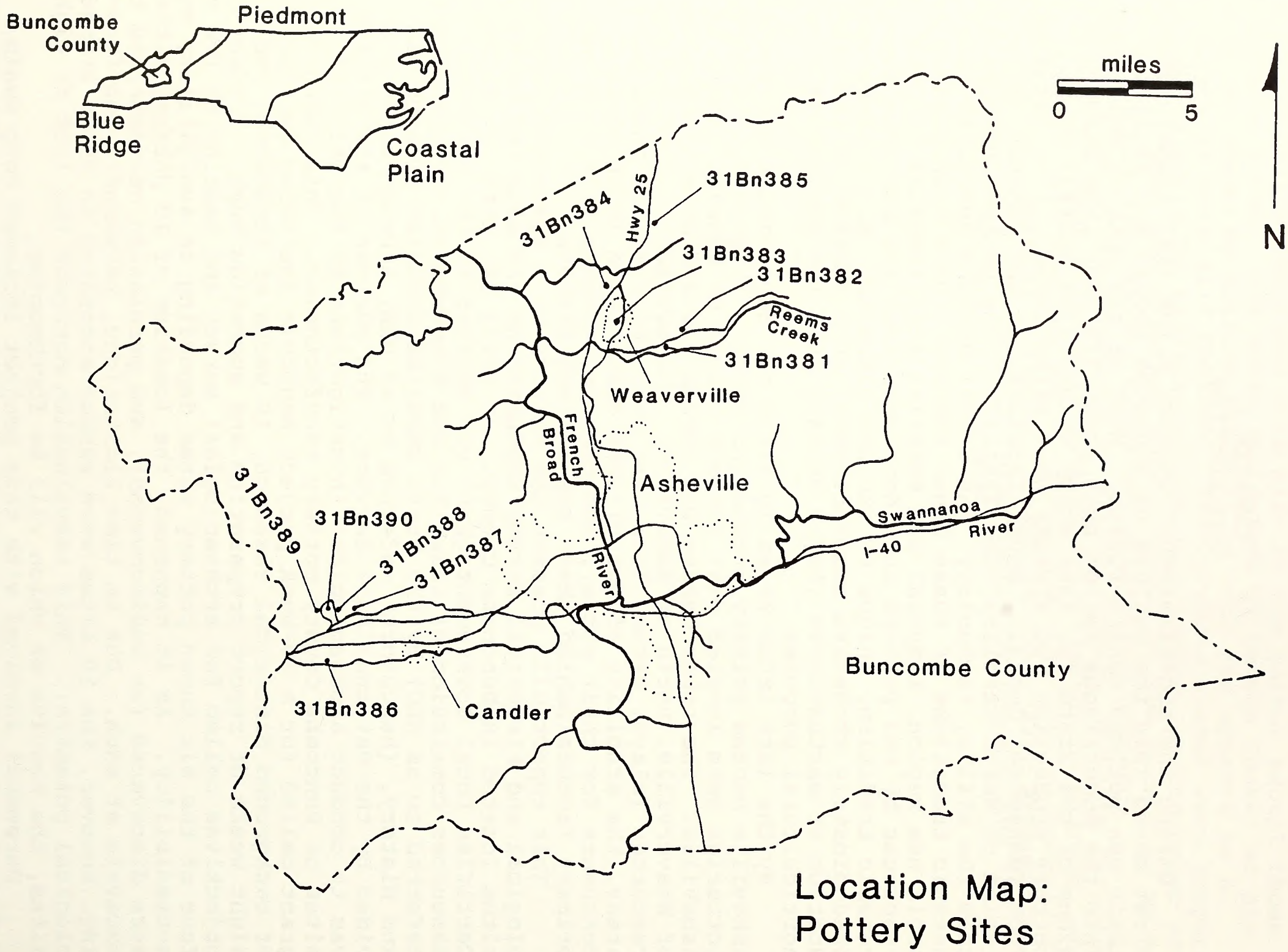

Figure 1. Map of Project Area and major towns near sites.

CHAPTER 2
PHYSICAL CONTEXTS

Environment And Vegetation

The study areas, located south and north of Asheville, are contained in the intermontane basin of the French Broad River and its confluence with the Swannanoa River. Asheville's elevation is 2300 feet amsl. This mountainous area is a part of the larger region known as the Appalachian Summit, a term used by Kroeber in 1939 and part of Fenneman's (1938) larger, Blue Ridge physiographic province. The climate in the western mountains of North Carolina maintains a cooler scale than the piedmont region, averaging 56.5 degrees mean annual temperature in the valleys and 43.3 degrees in the mountains. Latitude and elevation control temperature variations and these effect the length of growing seasons in valleys and mountains. Rainfall in the mountain region has been recorded heavy at times in summer and early fall seasons, often resulting in local flooding of the valleys. Mean annual rainfall ranges from 50 to 60 inches (Purrington 1983:92). Snowfall in the region is quite variable, and may range from 8 to 30 inches of accumulation, again depending on latitude and elevation.

Vegetation in the main valley floors of the Appalachian Summit, where the study sites are located, consisted of typical agricultural bottomland species, such as mixed grasses, weeds, blackberry brambles, thistles, and clover. Areas surrounding the sites are mixed mesic oak-chestnut forest, with some pines, sourwood, maple, black locust, beech, and poplar stands noted. Ground vegetation bordering streams consists of ferns, wood sorrels, Queen Anne's lace, vetch, heptica, baneberry, Solomon's seal, deptford pinks, and phlox, to name a few. Evergreen shrubs such as mountain laurel, rhododendron, and hobblebush are also present.

The faunal population of the region includes mammals such as white-tail deer, black bear, bobcat, wolf, groundhog, rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, fox, beaver, skunks, muskrats, and opossums. Game fowl includes turkey, grouse, and pigeon and some migrating fowl such as ducks and geese. Other bird species such as woodpeckers, titmouse, jays, chickadees, nuthatches, owls, hawks, quail, and eagles are found here (Keel 1976:9). Varieties of turtles, amphibians, and snakes are common to the area, as well as game fish such as trout, bass, pike, perch, and catfish.

Soils And Petrology

Soils of the area are directly correlated to the local climate, topography, petrology, and vegetation. High mountain soils which occur between 2000 and 3500 feet consist of parent materials derived from acidic crystalline rocks (i.e., gneisses, granites, and mica schists), basic crystalline rocks (i.e., diorites, or hornblendes), very micaceous rocks (i.e., talcose

schists, or light gneisses), shales, slates, quartz, fine-grained sandstones, and very localized limestones (Keel 1976:7). Maturity of soil types and their suitability for agricultural purposes are dependent on elevation and location, more specifically, mountain slopes versus valley floors. Typically younger alluvial soils comprise the valley floors. Although all soils are formed through processes of weathering and all clays are ultimately derived from igneous rock, the soils at the different sites vary according to the nearest drainage system. In most cases modern soil maps are oriented towards the agriculturalists and the soils usefulness as farmland, pasture, etc. Immediate deposits of clay suitable for pottery production may often occur between or within major soil divisions. Therefore, the presence or absence of specific clay resources (or beds) related to each pottery site location will be discussed later in the text with individual site descriptions. Specific soil types for each pottery site location are provided in Table 1, adapted from the 1977 Soil Conservation Service study of Buncombe County, edited by Bailey, et al. It should be noted that all but two of the pottery sites contain Haynesville/Evard soil types. The two exceptions contain the next most common soil types in the region.

Table 1
Soil Types for Ten Pottery Sites

Site Name	Location	Soil Type	Description/ Properties
Bachelder (31Bn386)	Luther	Codorus-Comus-Tate	0-7% slope, good agricul., flood pln.
Stone/Penland (31Bn387)	Jugtown	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain
Trull (31Bn388)	Big Cove	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain
Rutherford (31Bn389)	Big Cove	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain
Fulbright (31Bn390)	Big Cove	Saluda Haynesville	25-45%, poor agricul. poor drainage
Donkel (Presnell) (31Bn381)	Reems Creek	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain
Donkel (Church) (31Bn382)	Reems Creek	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain
McClure/Yoder (31Bn383)	Weaverville	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain
Cheek (31Bn384)	Clarks Chapel	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain
Lankford (31Bn385)	Stockville	Haynesville Evard	7-25%, fair-good agricul., well drain

CHAPTER 3
CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The pottery sites examined during this study were located in the Weaverville and Candler communities of Buncombe county, which was founded in 1791 from portions of what was then Rutherford and Burke counties. The settlement histories of Weaverville and Candler will be presented in upcoming sections. In order to understand the historic development of Buncombe County, however, a chronological summary of the surrounding region is essential.

Asheville and the pottery sites are located in a major drainage basin which has been occupied continuously by people traveling along the waterways. Previous archaeological investigations in the regions have dealt specifically, and predominately, with prehistoric human activities and have been summarized elsewhere (Keel 1976, Dickens 1978, and Purrington 1983). Prior to this project, no archaeological investigations have been conducted on traditional pottery manufacturing sites. Historical research by several individuals, however, has been done on the Buncombe County potters and will be reviewed later in this section.

Historic Chronology

Recorded history begins with the published chronicles of the Spanish explorer Hernando De Soto who traveled through western North Carolina (and possibly Buncombe County) in 1540. Later explorations by Europeans into the area occurred in 1673 when James Needham and Gabriel Arthur established trade networks with the Cherokee Indians, native occupants of the region (Sharpe 1948:34). Early trade routes followed preexisting Indian paths which traversed the present day location of Asheville, at the confluence of the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers (N.C. Clipping File 1979:844).

By the onset of the American Revolution, the British had designated the limits of colonial expansion westward to be the Blue Ridge Mountains foothills. With this assurance of territorial integrity the Cherokees aligned themselves with the British. Conflicts between the Cherokee and early colonists resulted in a major confrontation headed by General Griffith Rutherford in 1776. He destroyed Cherokee villages and dispersed settlements of the Indian Nation.

Early settlers were predominately Scotch-Irish immigrants from Ulster in North Ireland, who left to escape failing wool and weaving industries burdened from restrictive British tariffs. The first permanent settlers of the Swannanoa Valley were Samuel Davidson and his family in 1784. The County of Buncombe was founded in 1791, and a log courthouse was built in 1793 on what is now called Pack Square. One year later, a land grant was obtained by John Burton to lay out forty-two half-acre lots for a settlement he called Morristown. In 1797, the town was incorporated and the name changed to Asheville, in honor of Governor Samuel Ashe. In 1828 a major wagon road was opened along the

French Broad River which connected to East Tennessee. This passageway helped to dissolve frontier barriers and travel increased in both directions through the mountains. To the south, the Asheville/Greenville Plank Road was completed in 1851 and opened corridors of trade and settlement. In 1840 Asheville's population was around 500; in 1860, 1100; in 1880, 2610; in 1890, 10,237; and by 1930, 50,193 (N.C. Clipping File 1979:844).

During the Civil War, Asheville served as a Confederate military center. Early industry producing Enfield Rifles kept the county prosperous. Captain Zeb Vance, who later became a state governor, headed up the Rough and Ready Guards. The population of Asheville, no longer isolated from the rest of the state or nation, began to grow. Its frontier facade began to fade. By the 1880s, Asheville was being billed as a health resort, with its clear mountain air, lush vegetation, abundant streams, and beautiful vistas. When the railroad was completed, new industry and growth arrived. Construction of luxury hotels and homes reflected a land-boom lasting into the early 1930s when the Great Depression halted these activities. But the creation of two expansive natural attractions, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, provided a road to recovery for the residents of Asheville and Buncombe County (N.C. Clipping File 1979:846).

Previous Research on Pottery in Buncombe County

Prior to this project, no archaeological research had been conducted on traditional pottery sites of Buncombe County. Extensive historical research on the subject, however, has been going on since the late 1930s, with publication of Eaton's book, Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands, and earlier newspaper articles from local sources describing works at Penland and Bachelder potteries. More recently, research and published references by Pat Johnston and Daisy Wade Bridges in 1984 (on the Bachelder pottery), Bob Conway and Ed Gilreath's 1974 exhibition catalog of North Carolina pottery, and Deena Dillingham's 1981 work on the Reems Creek (Donkel) Pottery have provided abundant site specific historical information. In 1986, Charles Zug, a folklorist at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, published a book entitled, Turners and Burners: The Folk Potters of North Carolina. This primary text is the only extensively researched document dealing with traditional pottery in North Carolina, presented in historical and folklore contexts.

Unfortunately, few of the references previously described have provided information regarding the archaeology of such sites. In the past, only the pottery sites associated with the Moravian settlements in the central piedmont have received archaeological attention. Recently, however, work was begun on pottery sites located in other regions of the state. In 1986 a preliminary reconnaissance survey of pottery sites in Alamance and Chatham counties was conducted by the author (Carnes 1986). The survey was done as part of a course requirement, and no funds were available for in-depth investigations. The purpose of this

survey was to locate and test, where possible, nineteenth century pottery kiln sites. During the project six sites were located and two were subsurface tested. The author then chose one of the sites for intensive archaeological investigations, along with another pottery site located in Lincoln County, in the Catawba Valley region. These two sites were excavated in the fall of 1987 and winter of 1988. Together they form the basis for research investigating the transition from earthenware to stoneware manufacturing among traditional potters in North Carolina (Carnes 1988). Excavations at these sites revealed the foundation remains of three kilns, two at the Alamance County site and one at the Lincoln County site. Again, these sites represent the only known kiln sites to be archaeologically investigated outside the Moravian settlement.

These recent efforts in archaeological exploration of traditional pottery kiln sites have demonstrated the importance of corroborative evidence in documenting this cottage industry. By studying the physical remains of pottery sites (such as kiln styles, waster materials, kiln furniture, and site proxemics), archaeologists can provide additional insights into technological aspects of ceramic production. Historical and archaeological research have been successfully combined on other pottery sites located in the Southeastern United States (e.g., Castille, et al., 1988; Landreth 1985; Brackner 1981; and Smith and Rogers 1979).

Through this county-wide project, an attempt was made to systematically survey and assess the archaeological potential of Buncombe County pottery sites. In addition, relevant historical data also was collected on each of the potters and pottery sites to enhance the physical evidence provided by archaeological research. Finally, unpublished notes, photos, and references were generously shared by Rodney Leftwich, a local art instructor, potter and collector of Buncombe County pottery. His private collection of reference material and local pottery provided valuable insight into the ceramic tradition of the region.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH DESIGN, QUESTIONS, AND METHODOLOGY

This section will discuss the project objectives, as outlined in the grant's scope of work, and the methodology employed to achieve those objectives. In addition, research questions related to the regional and local significance of the sites, their physical and historical characteristics and their potential for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (as a Historic District) will be presented.

Research Design

The primary objective of the project was "to conduct archaeological survey and testing investigations at and around two to four of the following sites depending on availability and accessibility for research: Bachelder, Stone/Penland, Trull, Donkel, Cheek, and Lankford pottery sites." The project was to consist of three phases, conducted simultaneously if necessary. Phase One consisted of background research to determine the locations of the above mentioned properties and their suitability for investigations. Phase Two was to select two to four of the sites, and conduct archaeological testing to assess the potential for the presence of features and structures, and determine site boundaries and site significance. This report represents Phase Three, which summarizes the field results, assesses the sites' potential for nomination to the Register, and offers recommendations for future research.

Because the primary purpose of the project was to assess the archaeological potential of selected Buncombe County pottery sites, determine site boundaries and establish site significance, the operational premise of the survey was basically reconnaissance. Site boundaries were determined through testing and mapping. Archaeological potential and integrity were assessed through subsurface investigations. Finally, a few questions were posited to guide research orientation and to help establish site significance.

Research Questions

Research questions of regional concern include:

1. How do the Buncombe County potteries differ or compare to other pottery manufacturing sites located in North Carolina (i.e., Catawba Valley or Central Piedmont), or in other states in the southeast (i.e., South Carolina, Georgia, or Tennessee)?

2. How do the stonewares manufactured in Buncombe County compare in vessel form, paste/glaze composition, or decoration to wares produced in other regions? Specifically, how does the

alkaline glaze found in this region differ from that found in Catawba Valley or the Edgefield District of South Carolina?

3. Do similarities or differences in these wares signal some evidence for the exchange of ideas or people (potters) between the regions?

4. How do the temporal characteristics of Buncombe County pottery manufacturing compare to other regions within the state, and what are the temporal manifestations of this cottage industry?

Research questions of specific local concern include:

1. Are there identifiable "signatures" or specific attributes for each of the Buncombe County potters and their resultant wares?

2. Can specific attributes of each potters' work be traced to more than one site?

Research questions related to the physical characteristics of each site include:

1. What are the proxemics (locations of kiln, shop, waster pile, etc., in relationship to each other) of each site and how do they compare to each other?

2. What type of kiln, workshop, pug mill, or other equipment was employed at each site and what construction techniques were used?

3. How do the remnant physical structures or site morphology reflect the level or nature of production at each site (was it a factory operation or part-time endeavor)?

4. What can be determined about each sites' location and its proximity to the necessary natural resources (e.g., clay, water, wood, iron ore, glass source,etc.)?

5. How did community settlement patterns and transportation corridors affect pottery site selection by the potter and distribution and market variables?

Finally, research questions concerned with the historical characteristics of each site include:

1. How does the available historical data from each site confirm or contradict the archaeological results?

2. What types of historical information are most relevant to carrying out investigations of pottery manufacturing sites?

3. How does the historical information obtained through oral informants supplement the archival and archaeological records?

In summary, research questions included documenting, where possible, various attributes of each potter's wares, glazes, and kilns, and recording the historical and physical characteristics of each site. The degree to which the research questions could be addressed varied depending on the nature of the question, the results of archaeological testing and artifact recovery, and the reconnaissance nature of this project. Only ten weeks were scheduled for field work with only one full time archaeologist.

Methodology

The methods for archaeological and historical investigations were consistent with contemporary professional standards as set forth by the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior. Two weeks were spent doing archival research to gather background information. Priority time was given to field-work in order to assess subsurface integrity and site signifi-cance vis a vis the National Register of Historic Places. As a consequence, 10 weeks were scheduled for archaeological testing and no time was specifically designated for artifact analyses. Therefore, artifact analyses received the briefest coverage (four days) in the week prior to report preparation. A variety of field testing techniques were employed and will be discussed below. Modifications to the field techniques will be explained for each site.

Historical and archival research was conducted in the first two weeks of the project, and some additional work was done on rain days and evenings. Research focused on several objectives: (1) to obtain background information on each of the known (and unknown) potters who worked in the county; (2) to determine when the potters operated the shops; and (3) to gather general histor-ical information about the communities where the shops were located. Primary documents (i.e., census records, marriage, birth, and death records, and tax records), were researched at Pack Library archives. Land deed records were collected for some sites and old county maps were examined for early roads and community locations. Personal documents, such as family letters, genealogies, photographs, and histories were reviewed where available. Old newspaper articles, exhibition catalogs, and other texts on local handicrafts provided supplemental data. In addition, oral interviews with descendants of the potters, or

others who worked with them, antique collectors of local pottery, and other researchers contributed valuable insights and materials to supplement the written archival documents.

As part of background research, an effort was made to photograph extant pottery pieces from private collections which were marked or known to have been made by Buncombe County potters. These exemplary pieces also aided the archaeologist in learning to recognize unmarked or fragmentary pieces of pottery attributable to a particular potter or shop. Over 100 intact pieces of traditional Buncombe County pottery were photographed (in black and white and color). These photographs provide a permanent record of ware varieties to supplement the archaeological materials recovered at each site.

Field methods employed during this project were "of sufficient intensity to establish, within reasonable archaeological limits, the presence or absence of site features and structures," as stated in the scope of work. Ten sites were located by preliminary field inspections and informant interviews. Permission was obtained from current property owners to archaeologically sample each site. Two sites were eliminated from the revised site list because of their presumed lack of archaeological potential due to modern landscaping (Lankford site) and/or lack of confirmed kiln structure (Fulbright site). Therefore, each of the eight remaining sites received the following field inspection techniques (or combination thereof):

1. Recovery of surface material through systematic pedestrian reconnaissance.

2. Construction of a detailed site map, including extant features and structures, location of all archaeological test units, "memory" data received from site informants/occupants, visible site limits, contour variables (recorded with a transit), and placement of a permanent site datum.

3. Excavation of a series of subsurface test units placed across the site at regular intervals (10, 15, or 20-foot intervals, depending on site size), and/or in those areas of greatest archaeological potential if known. Test units on most sites were 2x2-foot units which were enlarged to 5x5-foot or 2x6-foot units if necessary to define or identify subsurface features. Because these sites often occurred in landscaped, grassy lawns (on private property) extra care was taken to "confine" the excavation units. Sod was removed in sections using an edger tool, placed aside and later replaced in its exact position (Figure 2). Large cloth sheets were spread on the ground adjacent to the test unit to catch screened dirt from the units. All soil from the units was screened through half-inch wire mesh.

Figure 2. View of Test Unit excavation.

ly sterile subsoil, bedrock, or immovable object. Sample profiles were photographed and drawn for the test units. All arbitrary and cultural stratigraphy intervals were recorded for each unit as well. Artifacts recovered from each excavation unit were bagged accordingly. Screened soil was then replaced into the unit, packed down, and the sod layer put back in place. Location, corners and elevations of each unit were recorded for the site map using a transit. In areas where dense vegetation covered the suspected site areas, shovel tests were excavated, using the same excavation, backfilling, and recording procedures. Shovel tests were approximately one to 1.5 feet in diameter. In certain situations, shovel tests were expanded into more formal 2x2 or 5x5-foot test units. Metal probes also were employed on two sites (Trull and Rutherford) in order to narrow the field for placement of subsurface test units. Walking transects of 10 to 15 feet apart, flags were placed where the probe hit something solid. After mapping, shovel tests were then excavated where the flags were placed. Scaled plan and profile drawings were made for all excavated features.

4. Black and white and color photographs were made of all excavation stages, general site layouts, and important artifacts for archival purposes.

Artifact analysis methods included quantifying and identifying each particular group of artifacts per provenience category (i.e., site, unit, level, date, etc.) following standard archaeological recording techniques. Over 11,000 artifacts were quantified, identified, and cataloged. Pottery fragments comprised only 42% of this total. Table 2 shows the artifact categories employed for this analysis. Completed artifact inventory sheets for each site are on file at the Office of State Archaeology and available upon request.

Pottery fragments were separated according to their vessel attributes, and rim sherds were later examined for vessel form identification. Capacity and makers marks, decorations, and other diagnostic elements for vessel sherds were noted on the catalog sheets. Results of the preliminary analysis are presented in the next chapter.

Table 2
Artifact Categories for Analysis

I. Vessel (Pottery) - Glazed/Unglazed (Vsl)
- Base
- Rim
- Handle
- Lid
- Shoulder
- Body/wall

II. Non-Vessel (Pottery) (Non-Vsl)
- Tiles
- Flue/Chimney
- Architectural, etc.

III. Kiln Furniture (Kiln Furn)
- Shelfs/slabs
- Props/wads
- Trivets
- Cones
- Draw Trials
- Saggers

IV. Architectural Debris (Archi Deb)
- Brick - Glazed/unglazed
  - Nearly whole/whole
  - Fragments
  - Rubble
- Mortar/concrete/cement
- Window glass
- Nails
- Fired clay (fused)

V. By-Product/Residue (By Prod/Residue)
- Slag
- Cinders
- Coal
- Clay samples
- Glaze chunks
- Other

VI. Miscellaneous Historic (Domestic) (Misc Hist)
- Ceramics - whiteware, pearlware, etc.
- Glass, container, lamp, etc.
- Metal, cans, ammunition, horseshoe, etc.
- Plastic
- Bone
- Other

VII. Lithic Materials (Lith)
- Prehistoric artifacts
  - C.S.P.P.
  - Flakes
  - Cores
  - Bifaces
  - Other
- Rocks - interesting
  - Ore samples
  - Quartzite samples

CHAPTER 5
RESULTS OF HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Initial historical research yielded information about 32 potters (or persons affiliated with pottery production, shop owners, helpers, etc.) known to have worked in Buncombe county between the mid-1800s and into the mid-1900s. These potters and associates are listed in Table 3. Twenty-one of these operated at known pottery shops with several potters/helpers working at one shop or another. Several potters' shops have yet to be located through historical or archaeological avenues.

Extant Buncombe County Pottery Shops

Because the primary focus of the project was to investigate archaeological remains of Buncombe County pottery sites, several important and existing pottery operations in the county were not included in the survey. The Brown Pottery, the Evan's Pottery, and the Pisgah Forest Pottery shops are included in this category of current operations. The Brown's family pottery in Arden and the Evan's (also a Brown family member) Pottery in nearby Skyland "are the sole survivors of the old folk tradition in the Mountain region of North Carolina", according to Zug (1986:101).

In 1923 the Browns left Georgia to settle in Arden, south of Asheville, and establish their pottery shop. Later, Evan Brown, Jr., moved to Skyland and established his own operation. The Brown potters, though trained in the traditional alkaline and salt glaze techniques, soon switched to clay slips (albany and bristol) for their stonewares. Not surprisingly, the wares produced at the Brown Pottery also changed in style, form and function. With commercialization increasing, fewer churns, pitchers, and jars were produced and casseroles, horticultural wares and tourist items became the primary products.

The Pisgah Forest Pottery, also located in Arden, was founded by Walter B. Stephens (1875-1961) in 1924. His unique version of "cameo" wares and crystalline glazes on porcelain bodies have been considered art forms by most ceramic specialists and clearly stand apart from more utilitarian forms produced by traditional potters. The pottery is now owned and operated by Tom Case and Grady Ledbetter. Prior to owning Pisgah Forest Pottery, Stephens built and operated the Noncannah Pottery (from 1913 to 1920) in the adjacent community of Skyland. (For additional information regarding the histories and operations of the Brown's, Evan's, and Pisgah Forest potteries in Buncombe County, see Raised in Clay: The Southern Pottery Tradition, by Nancy Sweezy, 1984.) While these contemporary pottery factories may no longer be considered by some to be "traditional" they do represent an important continuity of ceramic industry which began in Buncombe County in the mid-1800s and deserve recognition as such.

Table 3
Early Potters and Associates from Buncombe County

Potter's Name	Birth/Death	Potter/Associate	Shop Affiliation	Census Records (1850-1880, 1900-1910)
Bachelder, Oscar L.	1852-1935	Potter	Rutherford, Bachelder	Arrived 1911
Baird, Gilbert		Potter	George Donkel	from Leftwich 1989
Bassett, Jammie E.	1849-?	Potter	Unknown	1870
Cheek, James R.	1858-1915	Associate/owner	Cheek	1860-1910
Cole, T.K.	1908-1984	Potter	George Donkel	1910
Devlin, Francis	c.1800-?	Potter/helper	Stone/Penland	1860-1870
Devlin, John	1855-?	Helper	Trull	1860-1880
Donkel, David M.	1866-1951	Potter	McClure/Yoder?, Donkel	1900-1910
Donkel, George B.	c.1864-1956	Potter	McClure/Yoder?, Donkel	1900-1910
Fulbright, Albert	1867-?	Potter	Bachelder/Throck-morton, Trull, Pen-land, Rutherford and Brown	1910
Gorn, H. P.		Potter	Unknown	from Zug 1986
Gudger, Robert	1868-?	Associate	Bachelder	1880-1900
Lankford, Joseph	1847-?	Potter	Cheek, Lankford	1900-1910
Lankford, Jeter	c.1880-?	Potter	Check, Lankford	1910
Mathews, Isaac	c.1806-?	Potter	Stone/Penland	1850
McClure, S. Wheaton	1866-1960	Potter/Owner?	McClure/Yoder	1870-1880
Penland, Casius W.	1892-1975	Potter	Stone/Penland	1900-1910
Penland, W. Marion	1868-1945	Potter	Stone/Penland, Trull Rutherford	1870-1900
Penland, Joseph S.	1845-?	Potter	Stone/Penland	1870-1900
Penland, John H.	c.1825-?	Potter	Stone/Penland	from Zug 1986
Penland, C. J.		Potter?	Stone/Penland	from Leftwich 1989
Presnell, Levi	c.1811-?	Potter	Stone/Penland?	from Zug 1986
Rhodes, William	c.1845-?	Potter	Stone/Penland	1880-
Rutherford, James B.	1869-1953	Owner	Rutherford	1870-1910
Shuford, Mark	c.1837-?	Potter	Unknown	1880-1900
Stone, Edward W.	c.1818-?	Potter	Stone/Penland	1850-1880
Stone, J. Henry	1849-1911	Potter	Stone/Penland, Cheek Rutherford	1850-1880
Throckmorton, Thomas		Potter	Bachelder/Throck-morton	arrived 1940
Trull, Benjamin R.	1838-1911	Potter	Stone/Penland, Trull	1880-1910
Trull, James O.	1884-1958	Potter	Stone/Penland, Trull, Rutherford	1900-1910
Trull, Wm. A	1874-?	Helper	Trull	1900-1910
Yoder, Levrick	c.1829-?	Potter/owner	McClure/Yoder	1900

Historical and Archaeological Investigations

The ten sites located during the course of this project were clustered in two areas outside of Asheville, with five located in the Candler community to the southwest, and five located in or near Weaverville to the north. Table 4 lists the sites in order of presentation, which will include a brief historical overview of the two communities where the sites cluster, individual site information (historical and archaeological), and their physical descriptions. A discussion of the artifacts recovered during the investigations follows.

Candler Area Settlement

The earliest settlement in the Candler area occurred along the drainage basin of Hominy Creek and its tributaries during the late eighteenth century. An 1859 map of the county (by Colton) shows a stage coach line (road) extending from Asheville southwest to Waynesville. This route later became U.S. Highway 19-23. By 1903, railroads were added to this transportation corridor and Hominy Station was established. Cotton mills, brickyards, churches, and stores clustered along the main roads and waterways.

A northwest tributary of Hominy Creek, known as Webb Branch, forms the drainage in Big Cove. This cove was settled in the early 1800s by the Webb, Rutherford, Taylor, Cathey, Hall and Trull families. James Rutherford received two land grants in the cove area in 1799 and 1808, each for 100 acres. A 2.4-mile loop road (called Big Cove Loop Road) now connects current residents to the surrounding community. The Rutherford, Trull, and Fulbright pottery sites are located in the cove, and are accessible from this hard surface road. The Stone/Penland site, also known as Jugtown, is located along Justice Ridge Road, just east of the Big Cove settlement. The Bachelder site is located in the community of Luther, west of Candler, at the confluence of George's Branch and Hominy Creek and adjacent to the railroad corridor. An early 1900s map shows homesteads of the Curtis and Thompson families in the near vicinity and a store owned by James Buttrick on Luther Road.

The following descriptions include a brief history of each potter and pottery shop, site location, results of field investigations, and artifact summary for each site.

The Stone/Penland Site (31Bn387)

Historical Investigations

The Stone/Penland Site, also known as Jugtown, was one of the oldest, continuously operated pottery manufacturing sites in Buncombe County investigated during this project. Census records indicate that members of the Penland family were early residents of Buncombe County, arriving between 1807 and 1810.

The first Penland associated with pottery production in the

Table 4
Buncombe County Pottery Sites

State Site Number	Area	Site Name	Field Inspection	Subsurface Tested
31Bn386	Candler	O.L. Bachelder	Yes	Yes
31Bn387	Candler	Stone/Penland	Yes	Yes
31Bn388	Candler	Trull	Yes	Yes
31Bn389	Candler	Rutherford	Yes	Yes
31Bn390	Candler	Fulbright	Yes	No
31Bn381	Weaverville	Donkel (Presnell)	Yes	Yes
31Bn382	Weaverville	Donkel (Church)	Yes	Yes
31Bn383	Weaverville	Cheek	Yes	Yes
31Bn384	Weaverville	McClure/Yoder	Yes	Yes
31Bn385	Weaverville	Lankford	Yes	No

county was William Penland (born ca.1797), son of a John Penland from Pennsylvania. John Penland was the son of another William Penland, who moved from Pennsylvania to Rowan County, North Carolina, with his family in 1771. The second William Penland appears on the 1840, 1850, and 1860 census listings, which indicates he was born in North Carolina. Land records show that William Penland bought 75 acres of property at the confluence of Pole Creek and Hominy Creek in 1830 (Deed Book 22:41). Family tradition and historical documents do not agree as to whether William Penland was a potter (Zug 1986:95-98). He was, however, influential in establishing this early pottery shop with the help of Edward Whitfred Stone, a skilled potter who immigrated from South Carolina around 1844.

E.W. Stone was born ca.1818 in Virginia. He was believed to be the son of an English potter from Blackpool (Leftwich: personal communication). Stone left home at an early age and arrived in the Edgefield District of South Carolina to further develop his pottery trade. Historical records suggest that Stone learned to make alkaline glazed stoneware from Thomas Chandler, an active potter in the Edgefield District from 1838 to 1850. Chandler died in North Carolina in 1854, and may have had family connections in the state.

Although historical records do not indicate conclusively that William Penland's son, John H. (born 1825), was a potter, his son, Joseph Sylvester (William's grandson, born 1845), was listed as a potter in the census documents. Charles Penland (born 1833), another of William's sons, also may have made some pottery as evidenced by several pieces stamped "C.J.PENLAND" (Leftwich: personal communication). In any event, Joseph S. Penland and James Henry Stone (born 1849), Edward's son, ran the Jugtown Pottery Shop into the twentieth century.

J.H. Stone was later hired by James Cheek to turn wares at his shop until it closed in 1912. Joseph's son, William Marion Penland (born 1868-died 1945) married Henry Stone's daughter, Emma, and maintained the pottery operation for four more decades. A daughter of Edward Stone's named Sarah (born 1845) married another potter from South Carolina named William Rhodes (born 1845).

Rhodes worked for many years at the Stone/Penland Jugtown pottery. Other potters from South Carolina's pottery district were attracted to the rich resources of the area and business connections available there. Isaac R. Matthews (born 1816), from South Carolina, was listed as a laborer on the 1850 census, but was probably a potter who worked at the Stone/Penland shop. Francis Devlin (born 1807) was another potter from South Carolina. He was listed on the 1860 census record as a neighbor of John H. Penland. The 1900 census records also listed a William Stone (age 25) as a boarder living with Marion Penland and Emma Stone Penland. It is likely that he was a relative also employed as a potter or laborer at the Stone/Penland shop. Finally, Casius ("Cash") Walter Penland (born 1892-died 1975), son of Marion and Emma, continued to produce a limited line of pottery at the shop before giving it up to work at the Champion Paper Company.

Interviews with Mrs. Kathleen Penland (age 89), Cash's widow, and Doug Penland, one of their 12 children, provided useful information regarding family and site histories. The old homeplace of Marion Penland stands on the east side of S.R.#1208. Emma Stone Penland, widow of Marion, lived in the house until her death in 1965, at age 93. Cash and Kathleen lived in a small house a few hundred feet east of Marion and Emma's house. Cash and Kathleen married in 1917 and built the small, one-room, dirt-floor house in 1920. There they raised a dozen children. The pottery shop was located directly across the road, on the north side of S.R.#1208 and its intersection with S.R.#1214 (Figure 3). Kathleen recalled her mother-in-law, Emma Stone Penland, saying that an earlier pottery shop had once been located on the south side of S.R.#1208, further east of the houses. All evidence of it was gone by 1920, when she and Cash built their house.

According to one descendant, the homeplace tract consisted of 25 acres; Marion also owned 25 acres up in Big Cove. He was known to cut and haul wood from the cove tract to burn in his kiln. Clay was either mined on the home tract or was hauled by oxcart from the bottomlands near Luther. Pottery production was predominately a summer activity. Most wares were sold at the site or taken to local hardware stores for sale. At times, Marion Penland had several hands working at the shop to fill large orders. During the 1930 to 1950 production period, their main competitor was the Brown Pottery in Arden. Competition for fuel (wood resources) with local timber/lumber industries soon closed the Penland Pottery shop.

A photograph taken in 1938 and published in the Enka Voice shows the last shop at the site (Figure 4). An older log structure is seen in the back, with a well in front. A more recent wood frame shop is located in the foreground. It housed two gasoline-powered lathes (or wheels for turning) and one kick wheel. The edge of a shed which covered the groundhog kiln can be seen in the right edge. The shop door faced the kiln firebox end. The informant recalled that the kiln was loaded from the firebox end, and unglazed pieces of ware were often stacked in the low vaulted chamber. Children were recruited to help load and unload the wares. A photograph, taken in 1938, shows William Marion Penland at work in his shop (Figure 5).

Photographs were made of extant pottery pieces created by the Stones and Penlands, now in private collections. The earlier wares, all utilitarian forms, were glazed with alkaline glaze. This glaze was made from solutions of crushed glass or iron ore, or combination of both. Early wares were often marked by "E. STONE", "J.S. PENLAND", "J.H. STONE", or "W.M. PENLAND". Later stonewares, made by W.M. Penland or his son, Cash, were albany slipped and marked "PENLAND POTTERY, CANDLER, N.C.". In the later years, some tablewares (glazed in either alkaline glaze or albany slip) and unglazed horticultural wares were produced at the site.

Archaeological Investigations

Archaeological investigations were conducted at the

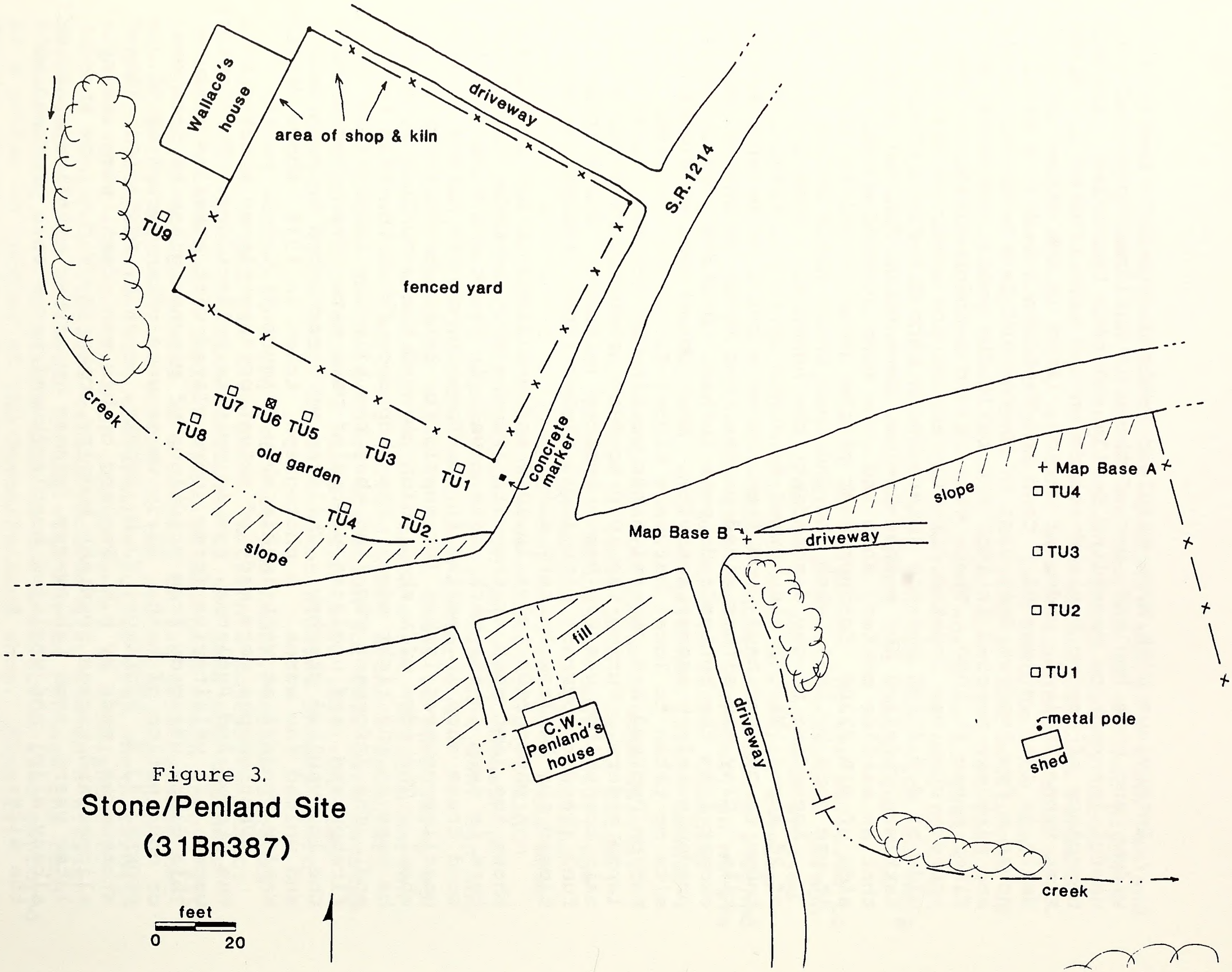

Figure 3.

Stone/Penland Site

(31Bn387)

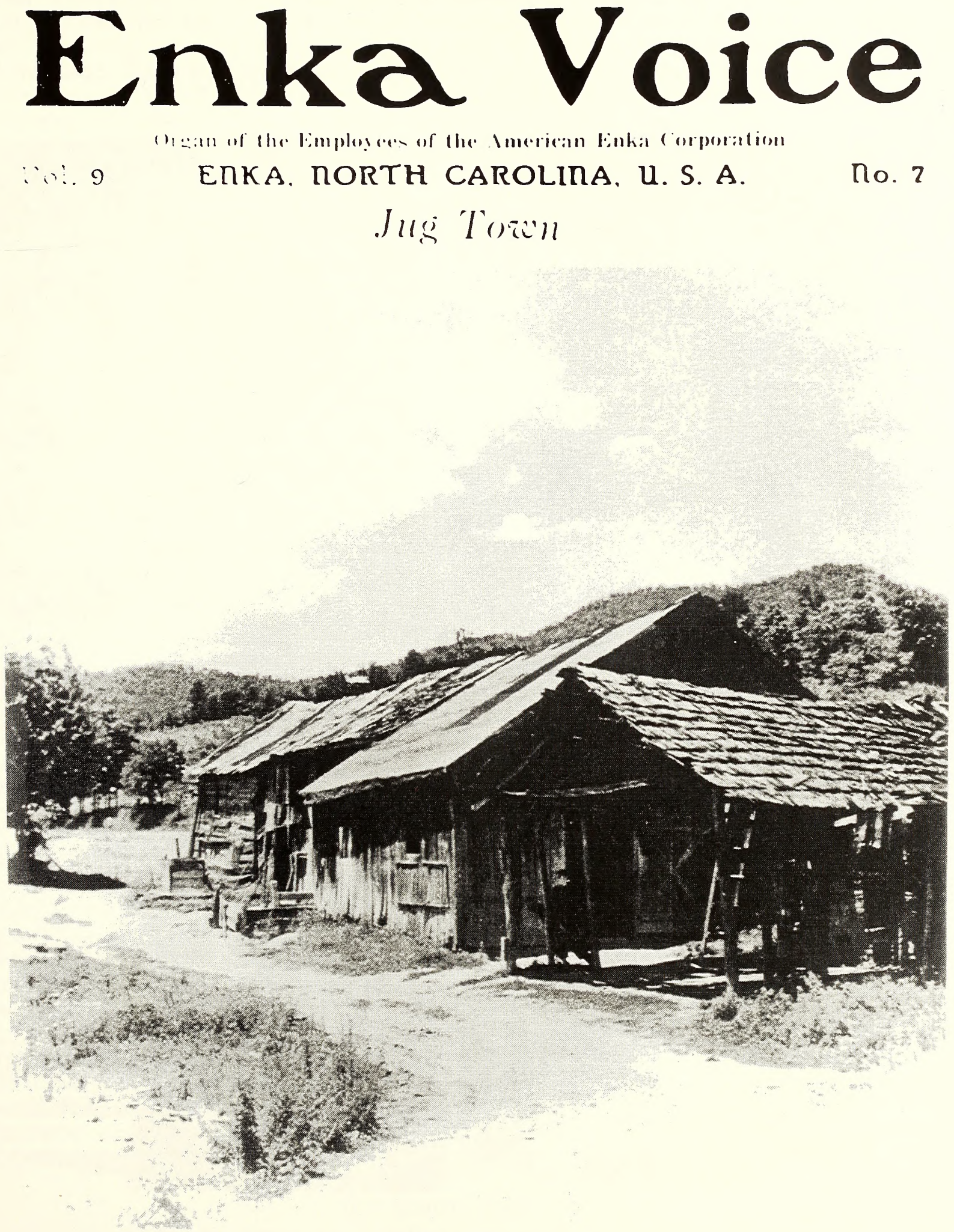

Figure 4. View of 1938 Jugtown Shop, Stone/Penland Site. (Enka Voice, Vol. 9, No. 7)

— *Jug Town's Mr. Penland* —

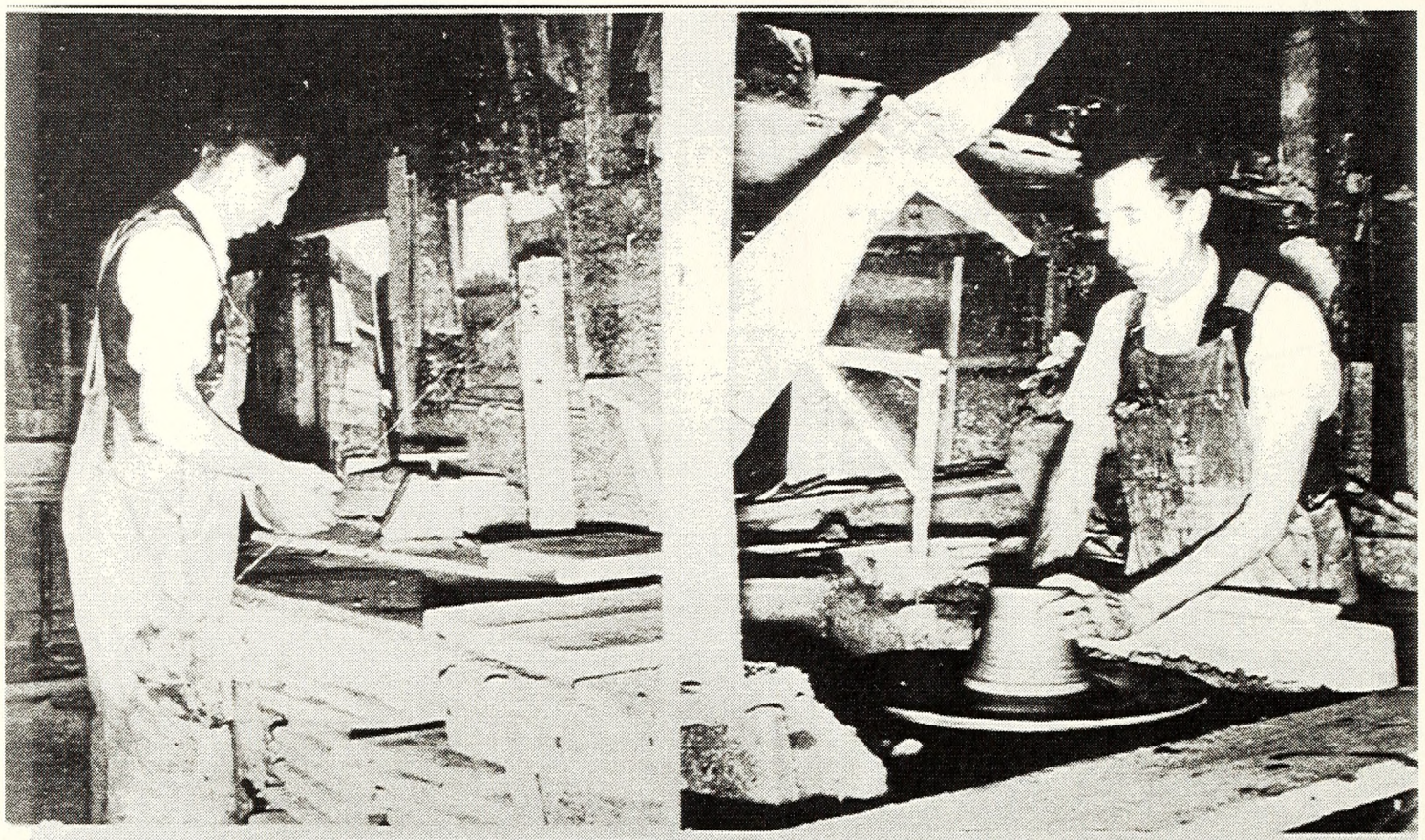

Figure 5. View of Marion Penland at work in 1938. (Enka Voice, Vol. 9, No. 7)

Stone/Penland site between May 21 and May 23, 1989. The first area targeted for testing was a grassy, vacant lot south of S.R.#1208 and east of a small unnamed stream. Information from two sources suggested this old garden plot was the earlier kiln/shop location referred to by Emma Penland. A surface collection along the north roadway embankment yielded numerous pottery fragments and glazed brick rubble. According to the current landowner, Doug Penland, considerable alterations had occurred to the roadway, driveways, and front yard areas of the old homeplace.

The low garden spot appeared to be the least disturbed. Four 2x2-foot test units were laid out 15 feet apart in a north alignment across the garden area (Figure 3). Artifacts were few (n=20), but compact clay fill was extensive. A line of single-laid bricks (oriented northeast to southwest) was exposed in Test Unit 1, adjacent to recent fill (containing plastic, electrical wire, and aluminum foil). It was later learned that this feature served as a platform for a house trailer which had been recently removed. No structural remnants or sherd concentrations related to pottery manufacturing were observed during these excavations. A decision was made to test across the road where the later (last) kiln and shop were known to have been located.

The site is located in the northwest quadrant of property where S.R.#1214 intersects S.R.#1208. A small unnamed branch (possibly springfed) parallels S.R.#1208 on the north. As shown in Figure 3, a house, driveway, and fenced lawn now occupy the center of the site. According to Kathleen Penland, the house and driveway are situated exactly where the old shop and kiln were once located (as seen in the 1938 photo).

Confronted with this data, plans were made to investigate the old garden area situated between the fenced lawn and the creek. This was done to determine the subsurface integrity for the remainder of the site and location of possible waster piles. Permission was obtained from the current owner, Henry Wallace, and a pedestrian survey was conducted. A total of 330 artifacts, mostly pottery fragments, were found on the surface. This finding suggested debris from the pottery shop activities had been scattered north and downhill towards the creek. Ten 2x2-foot test units were laid out across the garden, in two rows approximately 10, 15, or 20 feet apart (see Figure 3). A datum was established at a concrete marker adjacent to S.R.#1214. Eight of the 10 units were excavated and north profiles drawn (Figure 6). Depths of units ranged from 1.1 to 2.3 feet below ground surface. Stratigraphy in the units revealed two episodes of fill deposited on the site, probably coincident with house construction and alandscaping. Glazed brick fragments, kiln furniture, and numerous stoneware sherds were recovered from the test units and surface collections, but no intact structural remains were exposed.

Artifact Summary

A summary of artifacts recovered from 12 test unit excavations and surface collections at the Stone/Penland site is pro-

Stone/Penland Site
(31Bn387)

North Profiles

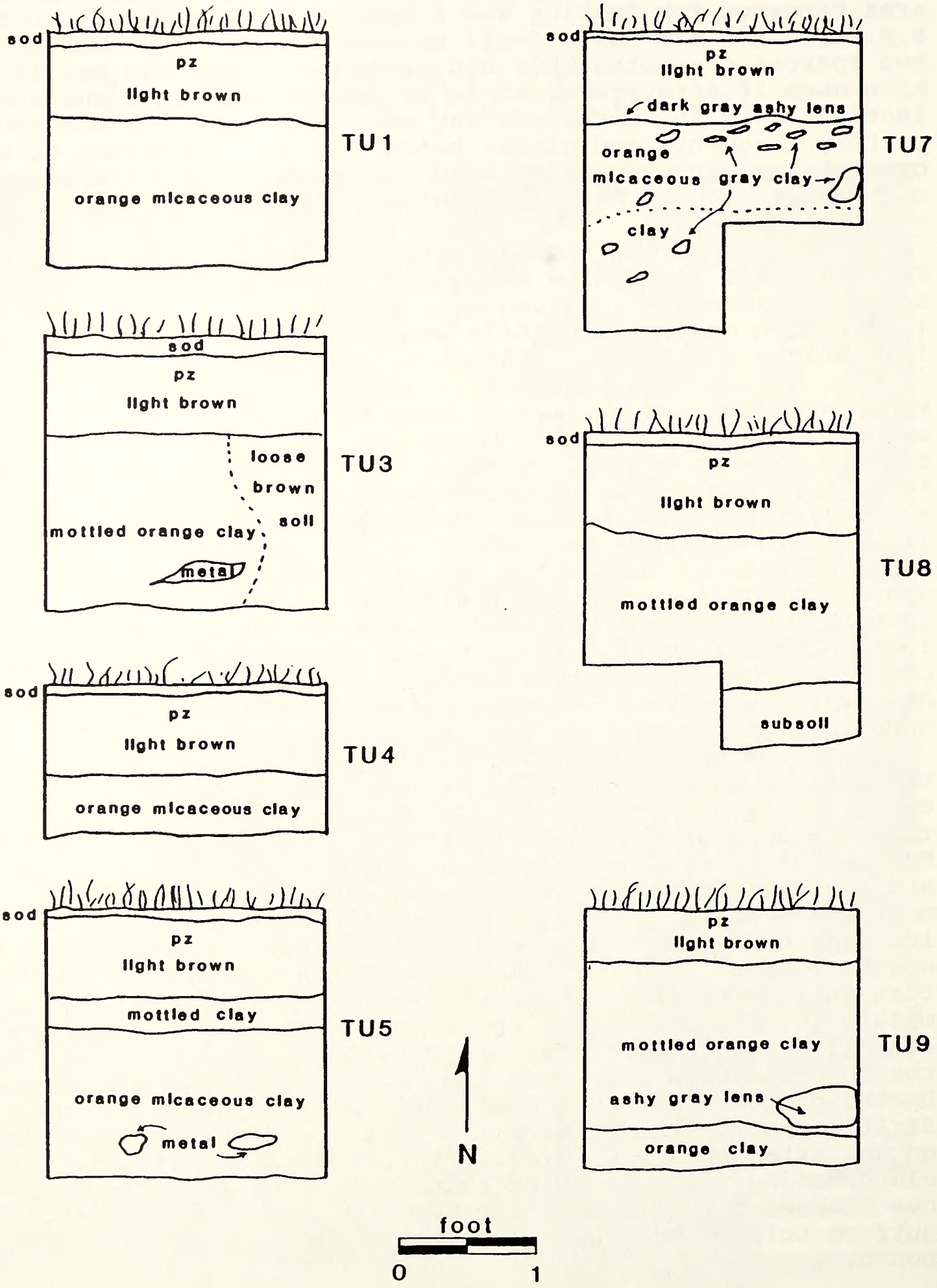

Figure 6. Profile drawings of selected test units.

vided in Table 5. A total of 737 items was found. Vessel fragments comprised the most frequent artifact class (60%, n=441) of the total assemblage, followed by Architectural Debris (15%) and Miscellaneous Historic categories (13%). All other categories comprised less than 10% each. The majority of vessel fragments were alkaline glazed stoneware; a few had rutile (titanium dioxide), and one rim sherd appeared to have cobalt accent color. One body sherd (from surface collection) was incised with a "6" as a capacity indicator. A single sherd from Test Unit 4 had been stamped with a "W", possibly for W.M. Penland maker. Forty-three pieces of kiln furniture were found at the site. Most of these were shelf/slab fragments used to stack the wares in the kiln. Test Unit 2 contained the greatest quantity of artifacts from excavated context with 92 pieces.

Vessel form analysis, based on 44 recognizable rim sherds, showed crocks (n=8) were again the most prevalent form, followed by jars (n=7), churns (n=5), unglazed flowerpots (n=4), canister forms (n=4), pitchers (n=3), and one each of cup, plate, and unidentifiable form. The canister may represent a cylindrical crock form.

The Trull Site (31Bn388)

Historical Investigations

Benjamin Robert Trull (born 1838 in North Carolina), first appeared on the Buncombe County census records in 1880. According to Opal Barnes, B.R. Trull's granddaughter, the first Trull in the Big Cove community was her great-grandfather, Reverend John G. Trull. Around 1870, John Trull deeded land to the Northern Methodist congregation to build a small church in Big Cove, near Webb's Branch. A stipulation required that if the church ceased to exist, the property would revert to the Trull family heirs. Indeed the church closed and the building was dismantled, leaving only a fenced-in cemetery atop the hill. Lumber from the building was used to build a homeplace down the hill for Ben Trull and his wife, Violet. There they raised nine children. The Trull family cemetery is still located on the hilltop near Opal Barnes' property and the old Trull homeplace.

Benjamin Trull's farm was located on the east side of Big Cove, along S.R.#1207 (Big Cove Loop Road). His main occupation was farming, but he apparently picked up the pottery trade along the way, probably through connections with the nearby Penlands. During the late 1890s, Ben Trull built his own pottery shop and was assisted by his two sons, William (born 1874) and James Otis (born 1884). William (or Bill), Trull lived next door to the Penland pottery shop and probably worked there as well. A 1903 Buncombe County map shows Bill Trull's house on the south side of Justice Ridge Road (now part of S.R.#1208), opposite "Jug Factory" (a.k.a. Jugtown, the Penland Pottery). Unfortunately, no families or homesteads are shown on Big Cove Road on this map.

James (or Jim) Otis Trull, went to work at his father's shop, along with Albert Fulbright, a potter from South Carolina,

Table 5
Summary of Artifacts from the Stone/Penland Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
T.U. 1: Old Garden	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	5
T.U 2: Old Garden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T.U. 3: Old Garden	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	4
T.U. 4: Old Garden	5	0	0	2	1	1	2	11
T.U. 1:Wallace Garden	7	0	0	4	2	4	1	18
T.U. 2:Wallace Garden	12	0	1	49	9	19	2	92
T.U. 3:Wallace Garden	19	0	3	8	10	10	0	50
T.U. 4:Wallace Garden	8	0	0	8	6	4	0	26
T.U. 5:Wallace Garden	30	0	0	5	0	15	0	50
T.U. 7:Wallace Garden	44	0	2	10	7	14	2	79
T.U. 8:Wallace Garden	29	0	0	11	0	7	0	47
T.U. 9:Wallace Garden	9	0	1	3	0	2	4	19
Surface: Wallace Gar	269	0	35	11	1	14	0	330
Surface: Bank S. of Road	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Surface: Near Chicken HS.	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Total	441	0	43	111	36	95	11	737
Percent	60	0	6	15	5	13	1	100

who settled in the cove area. A land deed dated 1904 (Deed Book 142:5), indicated B.R. Trull sold 17 acres of property to Albert Fulbright. In 1910, B.R. Trull also sold 20 acres to his son James (Deed Book 171:434). Benjamin Trull died in 1911 at the age of 73. Jim Trull married Clyda Rutherford (born 1894), the daughter of another Big Cove resident and pottery shop owner, James D. Rutherford. Trull continued to make pottery at other shops, however, namely the Rutherford, Penland, and Pisgah Forest operations.

Jim and Clyda had six children, and in 1958, when Jim died, the land holdings were divided among the surviving five children. Opal Barnes, Jim's daughter, acquired the "shop lot" at that time, and has maintained its ownership. Opal, who was born in 1912, has no recollection of the shop or kiln. According to her mother, Clyda, now 95, the shop closed before Opal was born. Opal and her husband moved to the property and built a house in 1963. Her sister, Margaret, who married the twin brother of Opal's husband, lives next door, and the two families maintain the hometract. During the last several decades, the field where the shop stood has been used for agricultural purposes.

A few intact pieces of pottery made by the Trulls were examined and photographed during this investigation. All pieces were stoneware and glazed with either alkaline glaze or albany slip. The albany slip pieces may have been made by Jim Trull at the Rutherford or Penland pottery shops. One monkey jug with albany slip is marked "PRESENTED BY J.O.TRULL SEPT. 15, 1911" - a time when the potter worked at the Rutherford pottery (Figure 7).

Archaeological Investigations

The Trull pottery site is located in an open field on the east side of S.R.#1207 and west of Webb's Branch which parallels the road. The site is bordered on the south by the Reagan's driveway and on the north by Opal Barnes' driveway. The site was altered when the state road was realigned and elevated. Fieldwork began on May 26 and ended on June 3, 1989. Ground surface visibility was minimal because the field was covered in tall grasses and hay. Therefore, a modified field strategy was employed. A steel probe was used to isolate spots across the site for subsurface testing. Walking transects east to west across the site at 15-foot intervals, flags were placed in probe holes where resistance was encountered.

Thirty-eight shovel tests (approximately 1x1-foot) were excavated to varying depths, depending on the level of bedrock and/or sterile subsoil. Average depth for all shovel tests was 1.9 feet. Shovel Test 35 was the deepest at 3.4 feet, and three shovel tests were less than a foot where bedrock was shallow. Shovel tests which contained more than five potsherds are circled on Figure 8, noting a concentration of pottery in the center portion of the field. Only two glazed (kiln) brick fragments were found, one each in shovel tests 7 and 12. Excavation of Shovel Test 15 exposed a lens of dark gray, micaceous, silty soil from 1.4 to 1.8 feet below ground surface. Initially, this discoloration was thought to be a cultural feature associated

Figure 7. View of Trull monkey jug dated 1911.

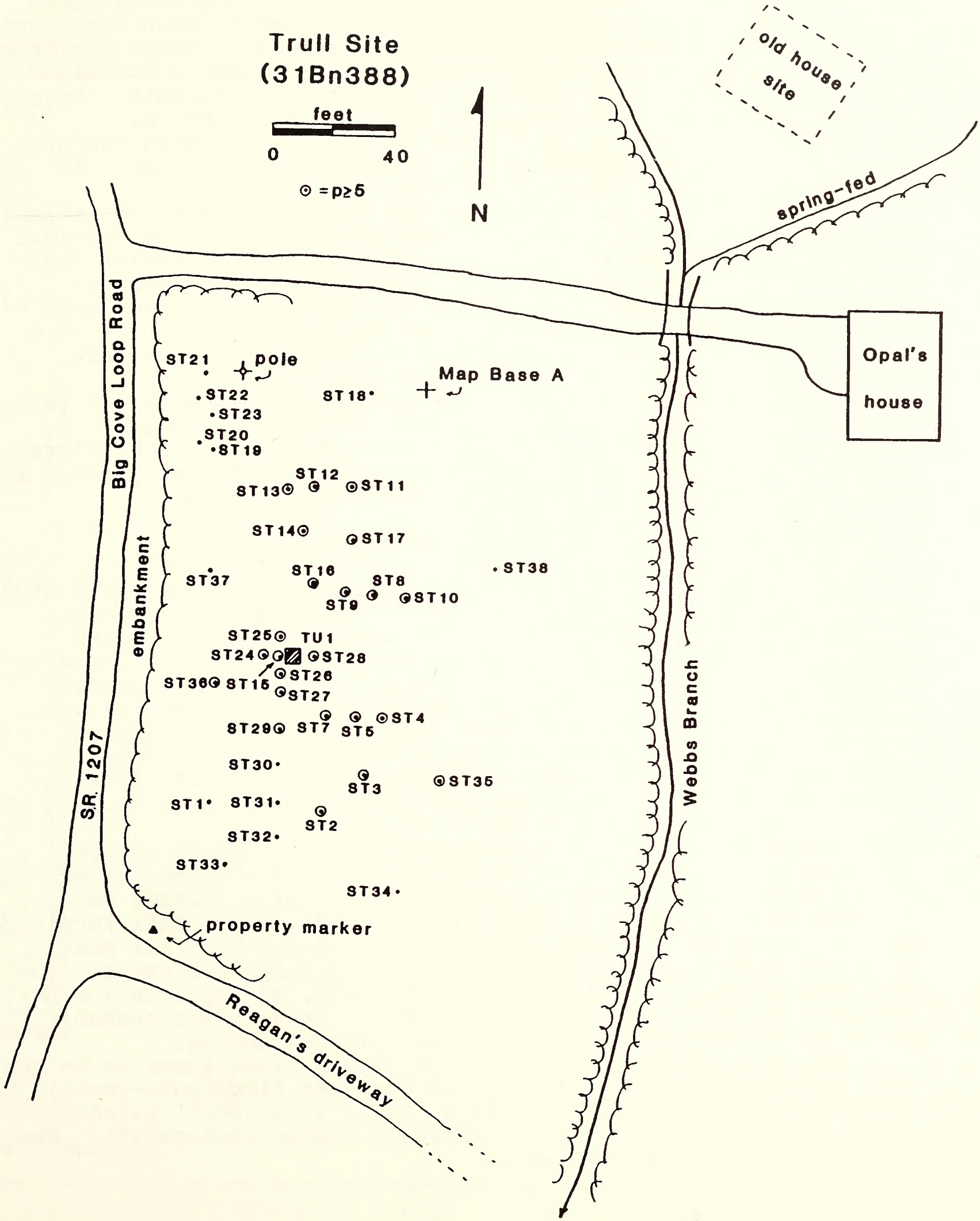

Figure 8. Location map of shovel tests excavated at the site.

with previous pottery activities at the site. A 5x5-foot unit (Test Unit 1) was then laid out and excavated adjacent to Shovel Test 15. Level I (from .2 to 1.4 feet deep) was a mixed brown loam (old plowzone) containing pottery fragments, kiln furniture, glazed brick fragments, nails and some charcoal. Level II (from 1.4 to 1.8 feet deep) was the gray, silty lens which contained no artifacts, but extended across the entire 5x5-foot unit. Deeper excavation continued in the northeast corner of the unit (2.5x2.5-foot section), to a depth of 3.3 feet. Below the gray lens was an orange, silty lens containing medium-sized river cobbles and gravel, and no artifacts.

Additional shovel tests were dug in four directions extending out from this unit to determine the horizontal and vertical extent of this gray, silty lens. The shovel test results indicated a linear deposit of gray, silty soil (below plowzone) oriented north-south, 35 to 40 feet in length, and east-west, 15 to 20 feet wide. Still no artifacts or cultural features were associated with this soil lens, suggesting a natural origin, (perhaps as a pond or remnant slough).

Before concluding field investigations a few shovel tests were excavated in areas where probing indicated no subsurface obstacles. None were encountered during testing but stratigraphic information was recorded. Finally, all units were plotted in using a transit and an overall site map constructed.

Artifact Summary

Artifacts recovered from test excavations at the Trull Site are provided in summary on Table 6. A total of 874 artifacts came from 38 shovel tests, one 5x5-foot unit, and a surface collection donated by the property owner. The surface collected artifacts, comprised of pottery and kiln furniture fragments, were picked up by the owner during the previous years' plowing. Large sherds came from the creek bank. They had been intentionally deposited there during clearance of the field for cultivation. Nearly half the total assemblage (44.9%) of artifacts from the site came from Test Unit 1 excavations. Shovel tests 15, 24, and 28 had over 30 artifacts each.

Vessel fragments, of alkaline glazed and albany slipped stonewares, comprised 73% (n=641) of the artifacts recovered. No marked sherds were found. Architectural Debris (mostly nails, and few brick fragments) made up 10% (n=85), while Kiln Furniture was 7% (n=60) of the total. Shelf/slab pieces were the most frequent kiln furniture, with a few fired clay wads/props. One polished greenstone atlatl weight fragment, of aboriginal manufacture, was found in Shovel Test 20. This artifact probably dates to the Middle to Late Archaic cultural period.

Analysis of 50 rim fragments revealed crock forms to be the most prevalent (n=28), followed by unglazed flowerpots (n=11). Other forms represented were jars (n=3), jugs (n=3), pitcher (n=1), bowl (n=1), and two utilitarian dishes (waterers?). One unidentifiable form was found.

Table 6
Summary of Artifacts from the Trull Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
S.T. 1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
S.T. 2	5	0	0	1	0	0	1	7
S.T. 3	7	0	0	1	0	0	0	8
S.T. 4	7	0	0	1	1	0	0	9
S.T. 5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
S.T. 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.T. 7	12	0	0	1	0	1	0	14
S.T. 8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
S.T. 9	9	0	0	6	2	2	0	19
S.T. 10	8	0	3	2	1	1	3	18
S.T. 11	9	0	0	10	5	0	0	24
S.T. 12	4	0	0	9	0	0	0	13
S.T. 13	5	0	0	4	0	1	0	10
S.T. 14	7	0	0	3	0	0	0	10
S.T. 15	24	0	1	0	1	0	5	31
S.T. 16	5	0	0	3	0	2	1	11
S.T. 17	6	0	2	2	2	0	1	13
S.T. 18	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	4
S.T. 19	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	4
S.T. 20	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
S.T. 21	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
S.T. 22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.T. 23	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
S.T. 24	34	0	2	3	1	2	1	43
S.T. 25	8	0	1	1	1	0	0	11
S.T. 26	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
S.T. 27	15	0	5	2	0	1	0	23
S.T. 28	25	0	1	4	0	8	0	38
S.T. 29	9	0	1	3	0	1	0	14
S.T. 30	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
S.T. 31	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
S.T. 32	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
S.T. 33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.T. 34	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	6
S.T. 35	5	0	0	0	0	0	4	9
S.T. 36	8	0	0	1	0	1	0	10
S.T. 37	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
S.T. 38	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	5
T.U. 1	319	0	25	21	91	17	2	393
Surface	63	0	17	0	0	0	0	80
Total	641	0	60	85	24	41	23	874
Percent	73	0	7	10	2.5	5	2.5	100

S.T. - Shovel Test

The Rutherford Site (31Bn389)

Historical Investigations

Buncombe County census records indicate that James D. Rutherford's grandfather, James J. Rutherford (born ca. 1800), and his wife Barbara were county residents by the 1850s. They had a son, also named James, (born ca. 1820) who was listed on the 1860 census records with his wife Sarah. It is unclear as to whether this James Rutherford was James D.'s father or uncle because by 1870, Barbara Rutherford (James J.'s widow) has a one-year old James Rutherford listed in her household. Neither Sarah or James are listed with the child, if they were his parents. By 1880 Sarah and James Rutherford appeared again, along with five children, and no James, who would have been 11. Thirty years later, James D. Rutherford, age 41, was listed as a farmer, along with his wife Cora Cole (born 1870), and six children. Thomas Rutherford, the fifth child (born 1906) is the current property owner. James D. Rutherford died in 1953. The old Rutherford homeplace still stands on the property.

James Devrick Rutherford (born 1869) was not a potter but built a pottery shop on the southern end of his farm located on the west side of Big Cove. Rutherford provided the capital and the facility and hired local craftsmen to turn the wares; among whom were Oscar Lewis Bachelder, Albert Fulbright, James Henry Stone, Robert Anderson, William Marion Penland, and James Otis Trull (his son-in-law).

The shop was built around 1907 and ceased operation in 1914 (Tom Rutherford: personal communication). The pottery was located in a small valley on the north side of a creek which feeds into Webb's Branch. The wooden-frame shop was equipped with a 20-foot water wheel to power the equipment. A long wooden race channeled the water towards the power wheel. Clay was hauled in from the rich claybeds located in Luther and/or Hendersonville.

A few existing pottery pieces known to have been manufactured at this site were available for examination. According to local collectors, most of the wares were albany slipped. A line of mold-made items also were manufactured at the Rutherford Pottery, in addition to the traditional wheel-turned utilitarian vessels. The shop operated at factory-level production; large orders were received, filled and then shipped out. Earlier stonewares produced were alkaline glazed consisting of a mixture of crushed glass and iron ore which produced a mottled orange-brown to black color (Zug 1986:98).

Archaeological Investigations

The Rutherford site is located on the west side of S.R.#1207 and north of a small tributary of Webb's Branch. Because of field crops which needed to be harvested, it site was the last pottery location to be archaeologically investigated during this project. Field work began on July 18 and ended July 22, 1990. An on-site interview with Tom Rutherford, current owner and descendant of James D. Rutherford, provided significant informa-

tion in pinpointing the shop and kiln locations in a field adjacent to the relict homeplace.

Tom remembered the shop as a wooden frame structure set up on log sills which had a drying shed attached to one end. After the pottery shop closed, the shed was converted to an animal shelter. He recalled the kiln as a long, rectangular brick structure situated on the hillside. It was oriented north to south. He had helped to dismantle it several years ago when the field was being prepared for cultivation. An old roadway which connected the house to the road passed between the shop and the kiln. Figure 9 illustrates the site with appurtenances and archaeological test units.

A series of probe test were placed along the hillside southeast of the old house. Subsequent shovel tests revealed the remains of a brick structure. Five shovel tests were expanded into 2x2, 2x4, or 2x6-foot units to expose three sides (or walls) of a rectangularly-shaped brick kiln. Test Unit 10 was expanded to expose the chimney base of the structure. This end was the best preserved and was 10 brick courses in height (2.1 feet). Width of the chimney end was 1.8 feet. A builder's trench was discovered on the outside edge of the wall in test units 9 and 10. Shovel Test 6 was expanded into Test Unit 6, a 2x2-foot square, which revealed an intact portion of the south (side) wall of the kiln. Wall width on the side was 1.35 feet. Test Unit 8 was was placed of the opposite side wall (north). This side of the kiln had been disturbed but its alignment was determined from soil discoloration and hardness. Two inner brick supports were also exposed in Test Unit 10. These arch supports measured two feet square, and were spaced .8 feet apart across the width of the vault (or kiln interior).

Interior width of the kiln was 12 feet and overall width was 15 feet (two side walls of 1.5 feet each). Length was estimated to be between 21 and 23 feet. Exact length of the kiln was more difficult to determine due to disturbances at the firebox end.

Abundant waster materials, pottery, kiln furniture and brick rubble were recovered from shovel test and unit excavations. Test Unit 11, at the firebox end, yielded 285 (34% of the total assemblage). This noted concentration and the narrow width between arch supports at the chimney end, suggest that the kiln was probably loaded through the downhill or firebox end.

Detailed plan and profile drawings were made of test units 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11 (Figure 10). No shovel tests were dug in the shop vicinity. Given the shop's shallow foundation (on log sills) and the known extent of cultivation in the bottom portion of the field, it seemed unlikely that subsurface remains existed. All units were mapped plotted in and an overall site plan constructed (Figure 9).

Artifact Summary

Table 7 provides a summary of artifacts from the Rutherford Site. No surface collection was possible due to thick vegetation cover. Of the 839 total artifacts from the excavations, Vessel Fragments and Architectural Debris comprised the two most fre-

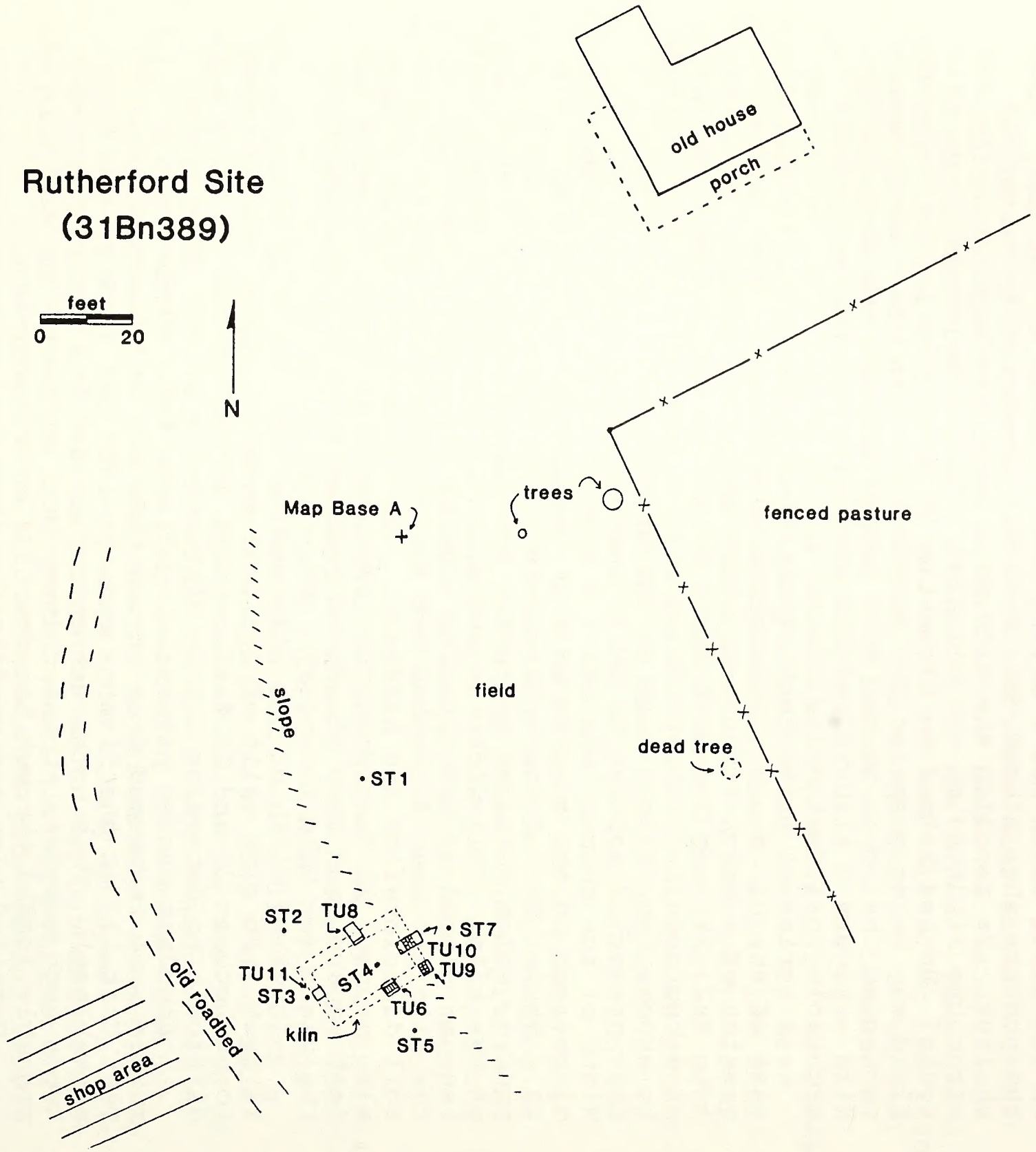

Figure 9. Areal view of site and kiln location.

Rutherford Site (31Bn389)

Plans and Profiles

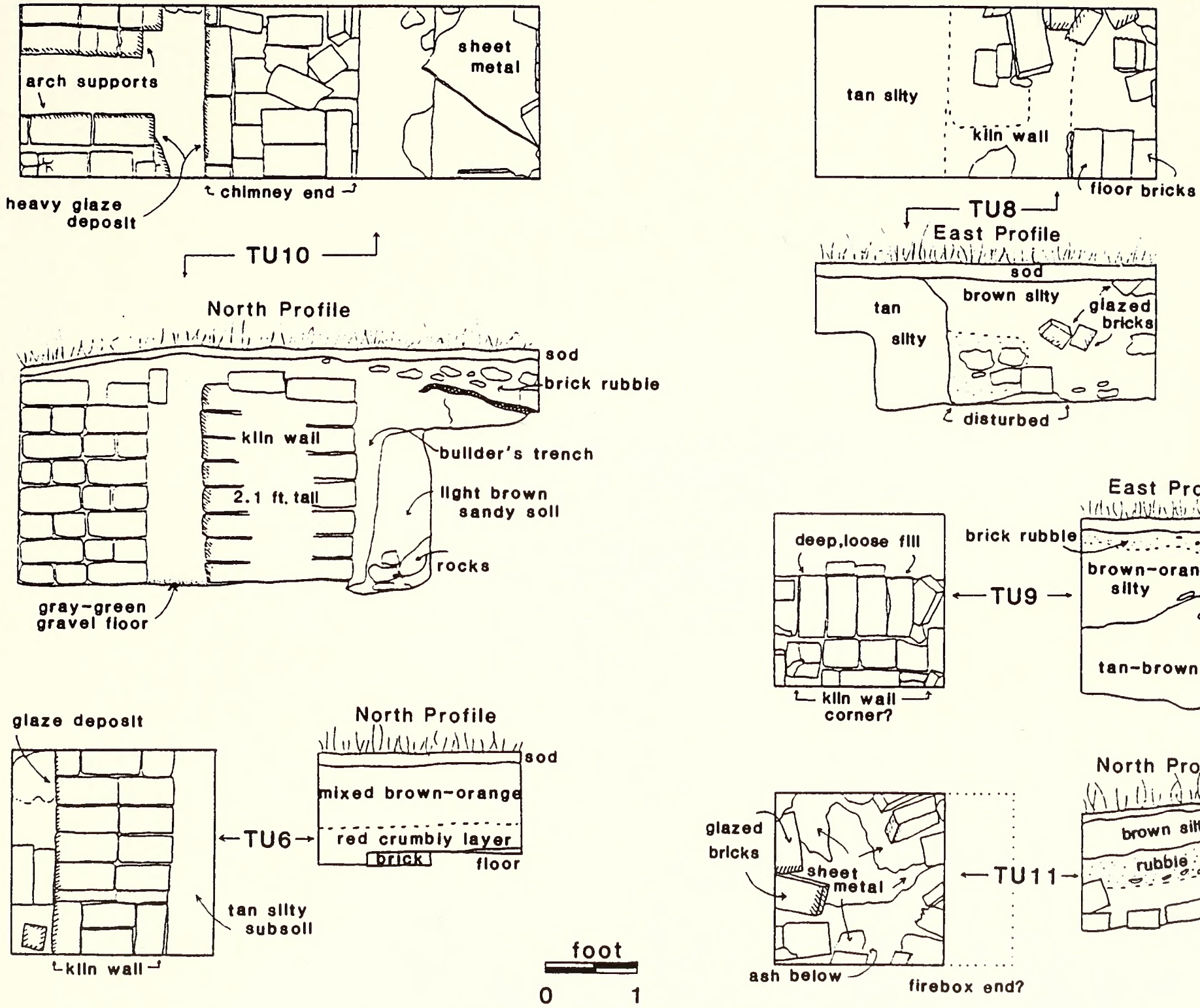

Figure 10. Kiln remnants exposed in five test units at the site.

Table 7
Summary of Artifacts from the Rutherford Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
S.T. 1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
S.T. 2	22	0	0	13	0	1	4	40
S.T. 3	55	0	1	54	0	1	7	118
S.T. 4	2	0	0	19	6	3	0	30
S.T. 5	2	0	0	11	2	0	0	15
S.T. 6	1	0	3	11	0	1	1	17
T.U. 6	4	0	6	24	0	0	0	34
S.T. 7	0	0	4	6	0	1	1	12
T.U. 8	77	0	5	86	0	0	2	170
T.U. 9	1	0	1	19	0	4	3	28
T.U. 10	0	0	5	37	0	4	2	48
S.T. 11	23	0	0	14	1	0	1	39
T.U. 11	175	23	12	57	7	11	0	285
Surface	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	363	23	37	351	16	26	23	839
Percent	43	3	4	42	2	3	3	100

quent categories, with 43% (n=363) and 42% (n=351), respectively. Bricks, glazed and unglazed, were the most abundant architectural element. Thirty-seven pieces of kiln furniture (4%) were found. These were flattened shelf/slab fragments. One nearly whole, glazed draw trial (or tester) was found in Shovel Test 7 (Figure 11). Twenty-three ceramic items, tentatively identified as Non-vessel, were found in Test Unit 11 (Figure 12). The function of these unglazed ceramic objects has yet to be determined. It is reasonable to assume that these items may have served a non-local, non-domestic function since the Rutherford factory supplied goods to distant commercial enterprises as well as local consumers.

Of the 363 pottery fragments, only 46 rim sherds were recovered for vessel form analysis. All vessel form rims were albany slipped. Three body sherds were slipped with a whitish, opaque glaze similar to a bristol glaze; two were accented with cobalt. Vessel forms represented were crocks (n=15), jars (n=3), unglazed flowerpots (n=93), a churn, and a bowl.

THE BACHELDER SITE (31Bn386)

Historical Investigations

Oscar Lewis Bachelder was born in Menasha, Wisconsin, on July 14, 1852. He was a third generation potter, the son of Calvin B. Bachelder (1826-1906), and grandson of Luther Cleveland Bachelder (1804-1850). L.C. Bachelder produced earthenwares in Maine from ca. 1830 until 1845, and later moved his family to Wisconsin. Following the death of his father (L.C.B.) in 1850, Calvin Bachelder and brother, Carlton set up a pottery factory in Menasha, Wisconsin which operated until 1860. Calvin then moved his family to Ohio and later to Pennsylvania, then to Illinois and finally to Nebraska. Carlton continued his own pottery business in manufacturing and wholesaling of earthenware and later stonewares in Menasha until around 1895.

Oscar received his early training in the pottery shop of his father, whom he described as a "stern master." Oscar left home at an early age and traveled around 28 states over a 40 year period practicing as an itinerant potter. He took pride in his ability to produce large pieces of pottery in great quantities. At 60 years old, tired of traveling, he became attracted to the rich clay deposits of western North Carolina and, through contacts with James Rutherford, he moved into Buncombe County. In 1911, he arrived to work for Rutherford's pottery factory, with the local potters, Trull, Penland, and Fulbright. He remained there until it ceased operation in 1914.

By that time, he had made arrangements with Robert Gudger to buy on credit four acres of land from Gudger's aunt (Telitha Morgan) near Luther. There he and Gudger, in partnership, set up a pottery shop in 1916 (Figure 13). Bachelder named the pottery after an admired literary character, Omar Khayyam. In the beginning Bachelder produced utilitarian forms which were made to serve the local, rural community. Gudger became the distributor,

Figure 11. View of draw trial from Rutherford Site. (Shown actual size)

Figure 12. View of non-vessel forms from Rutherford Site.

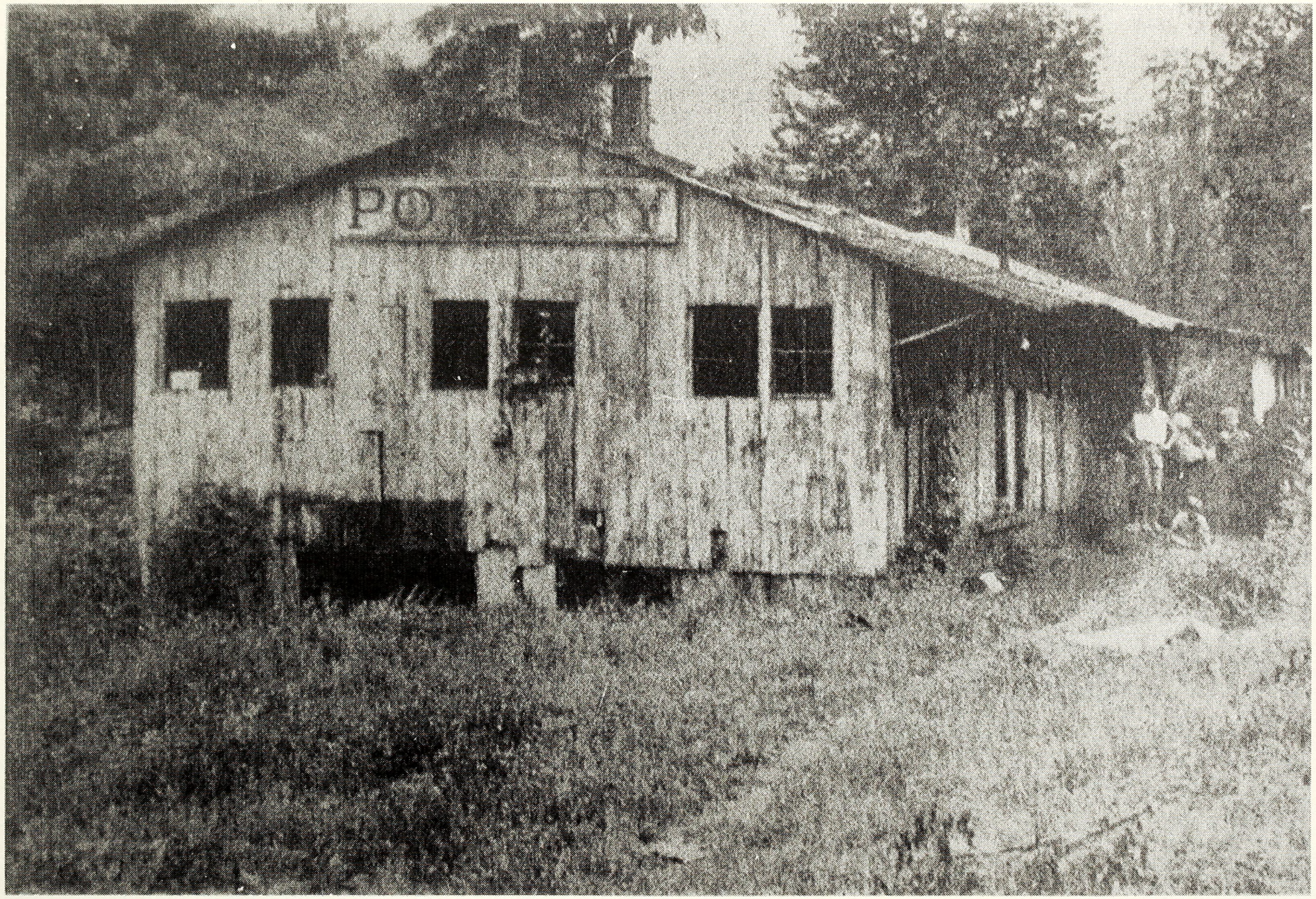

Figure 13. Early view of Bachelder Pottery Site. (Johnston and Bridges 1983)

and hauled the wares by wagon load to Asheville, Black Mountain, Old Fort, Marion, and Hickory.

Descriptions of the shop in later years, indicate that there were two kilns on the site, one a round downdraft type and the other a rectangular groundhog style (Johnston 1983:24). There were also two lathes or kickwheels used to turn the wares. All clays were dug locally, in the creek bottom adjacent to the site. Later, clays were hauled in or ordered from out of state and used to blend with local deposits. This practice was not necessary until Bachelder increased his production of art forms with a porcelaneous body.

Oscar married Agnes Collins in 1917. She later picked up the trade and helped her husband in the shop. She marked her wares with "AB". Gudger retired his half of the partnership to raise his family, but continued to take an active interest in his neighbor's pottery business.

Oscar then began concentrating on the production of art forms and tablewares. His glazes ranged in color from maroons to blacks to browns to whites, occasionally sprinkled with ashes, cobalt or manganese for decorative effect. His art pottery received national attention and in 1919 he was awarded a medal for the Applied Arts Exhibition in Chicago.

He had many helpers and potters who worked with him over the years, including Ray Welch, Eugene Mintz, Ned Williams, and Morris Gudger of Buncombe County as helpers; and Paul St. Gaudens of New Hampshire, Walter Stephens from Pisgah Forest Pottery, William Soini of Finland, and Converse Harwell of Alabama as potters. (For a detailed account of Oscar Lewis Bachelder and the history of the Omar Khayyam Pottery see O.L. Bachelder and His Omar Khayyam Pottery, by Pat H. Johnson and Daisy W. Bridges, 1983).

Oscar died in 1935 and in 1937, his widow, Agnes, sold the shop and kilns to Christine Gudger Bates and her husband. A small unglazed pitcher, from the current property owners' collection, is marked on the base "C.Bates, Aug. 1938, Omar Khayyam Ware". This finding suggests that Bates produced some pottery at the site and continued to use the Omar Khayyam name for her wares.

Agnes died in 1938, and shortly afterwards in 1940, Bates sold the land and shop to Thomas Throckmorton. Throckmorton was an artist/sculptor from Mississippi who had been working for the Shearwater Pottery. He and his wife produced art pottery and some tablewares. One informant, who as a young girl cared for the Throckmorton children, recalled that Throckmorton produced only mold-made pieces and hired Albert Fulbright, a local potter, assisted in decorating and signing the finished pieces. Most wares were made on consignment or were hauled into Asheville and sold at craft shops.

The informant also recalled only one kiln present at that time. The kiln was circular, 10 to 12 feet in diameter, and bottle-shaped with perimeter fireboxes at its base. The kiln was enclosed in one end of the wooden frame shop and living quarters were attached to the other end. Wood continued to be used as the primary fuel source.

Ray Penland and Roy Stamey also assisted Throckmorton in the production of molded wares. It is not clear how long Throckmorton operated the pottery shop, but with the outbreak of WWII and a depressed economy, he soon returned north to reside. He maintained ownership, however, until 1970.

The property, with its abandoned structures, was then sold to the current owners. According to them, the shop and kiln remains were still standing until 1972. The relict structures were then dismantled and burned off in preparation for a new house, completed in 1974. Subsequent landscaping activities in and around the house foundation and along the creek bank probably reduced any undisturbed deposits. Visible waster piles or structural remains were landscaped and planted over.

Archaeological Investigations

The Bachelder Site is located on the south side of old Waynesville/Asheville Highway (now S.R.#1130), and east of George's Branch and its confluence with Hominy Creek. As shown in Figure 14, the center of the site is now occupied by a brick house. Therefore, archaeological test units (2x2-foot square) were laid out and excavated south and west of this extant structure. These areas appeared to be the least disturbed by modern landscaping and were perhaps all that remained of the original ground surface. The front yard had been filled in during house construction.

Surface collections were made along the east bank of George's Branch, where informants had noticed brick and ceramic waster debris, and in the plowed garden (approximately two acres) located southeast of the house. The remainder of the site was covered in lawn and/or trees and shrubs. Map Base A served as permanent datum. Test Units 1 through 4 were situated 20 feet apart in an east/west line, 15 feet south of the house. Test Units 5 and 6, also 20 feet apart, were 65 feet south of the house on an east/west line. Test Units 7 and 8 were placed near a four-foot embankment which paralleled the creek south of the roadway. Test Unit 9, expanded into a 2x4-foot trench, was placed perpendicular along this embankment. North profiles for test units 1 through 7 revealed multiple stratigraphic levels 1.2 to 1.7 feet below ground surface. A layer of mixed brown loam with brick flecks was noted below sod. Sterile subsoil consisted of micaceous orange or olive clay. Figure 15 summarizes this information. Test Unit 8, not drawn, contained solid fill of mixed clays, probably a result of front yard and roadway alterations. Test Unit 9, cut into the embankment, contained abundant architectural debris and pottery wasters which had been piled along this slope to retard erosion. No distinct stratigraphic zones were noted below the layer of wasters. Subsoil was an orange clay. No intact structural remnants or a kiln foundation were exposed during excavation of these test units. This information combined with site history data given by the current owners, provided an assessment of subsurface integrity and testing was halted. Fieldwork at this site began on May 12 and concluded on May 19, 1989.

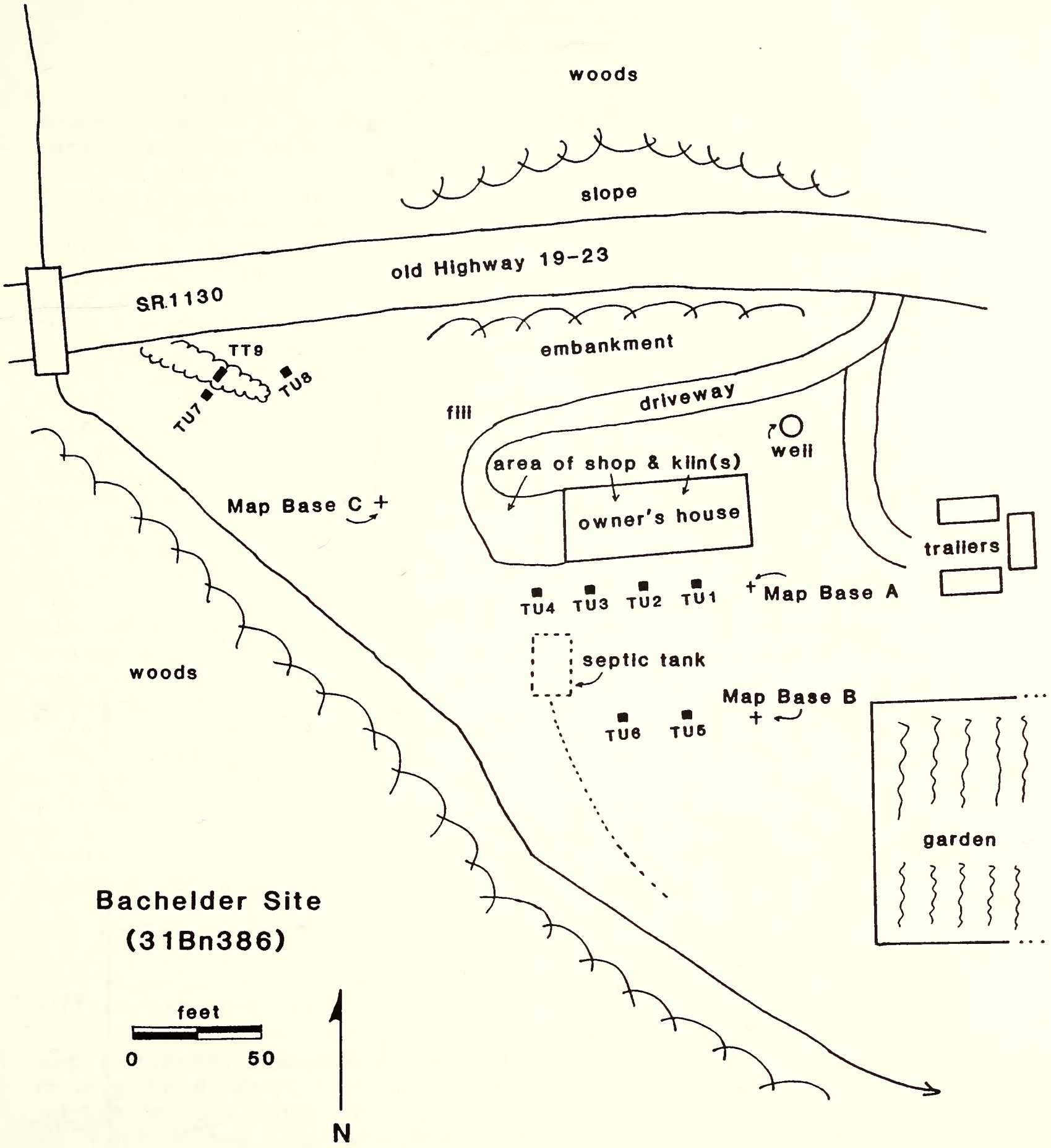

Figure 14. Areal plan of site showing location of test units.

Bachelder Site
(31Bn386)

North Profiles

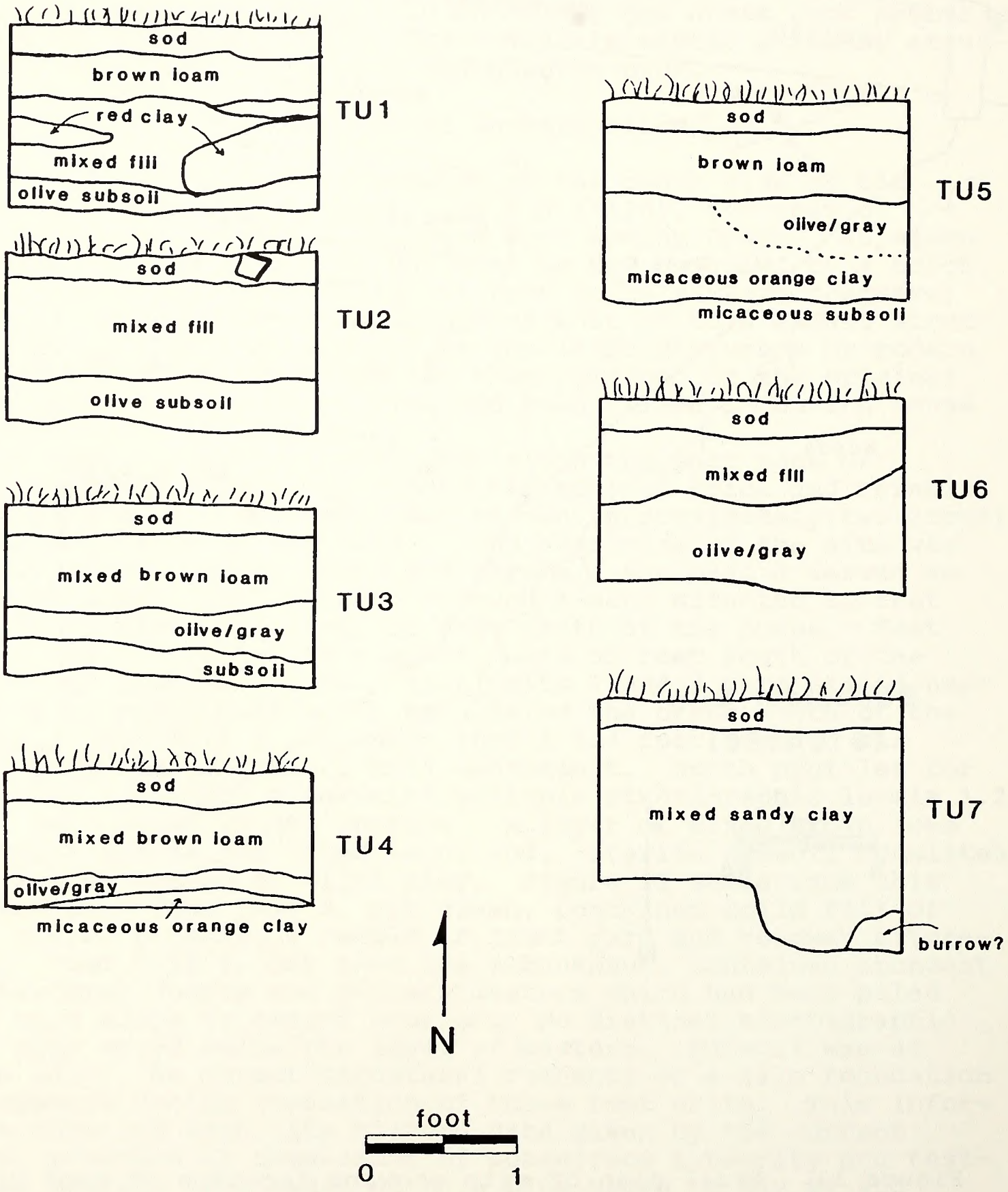

Figure 15. Typical stratigraphic profiles of test units at the site.

Artifact Summary

A summary of artifacts recovered at the Bachelder Site is shown in Table 8. A total of 888 artifacts were found during excavations of nine test units, and surface collections at five loci on the site. Vessel fragments represented 43% (n=383) of the total, and Architectural Debris (n=179) and Kiln Furniture (n=166) were the second and third most frequent categories. Kiln Furniture included hand-formed, expedient wads of fired clay, manufactured sagger forms, and mold-made props, cones, and trivets. These items were used for stacking and separating the pottery during firing. Non-vessel forms were fragments of ceramic drain tile (n=3) and one chimney flue for a stove pipe. Test Unit 9 provided the greatest concentration of artifacts (n=202), and test units 3 and 4 contained over 100 artifacts each. Surface collections totaled 201 artifacts.

A brief vessel form analysis was conducted using rim sherds retrieved from the site. A total of 77 rims were sorted into recognizable vessel forms, glazed or unglazed, and then counted. Twelve form categories were selected: crock, jar, churn, pitcher, cup/mug, jug, flowerpot/tray, bowl, plate, utilitarian dish, other, and unidentifiable. Most flowerpots were unglazed terra cotta, while most vessels made to hold liquids were glazed with albany slip, bristol slip, or some other clay. No alkaline glazed sherds were found at this site. Based on rim counts there were 18 crocks, nine jars, nine churns, three mugs, five flowerpots, two bowls, two plates, one waterer dish, 21 possible saggers, two vases, and six unidentifiable. Four rim sherds were stamped with a "2" capacity marker. One sherd from Test Unit 3 was embossed with a scriptive letter "M" possibly part of Omar Khayyam. A more in-depth artifact analysis could provide valuable information regarding Bachelder's glaze and vessel form variations, but such an analysis is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this project.

THE FULBRIGHT SITE (31Bn390)

Historical Investigation

According to census data Albert Fulbright was born in 1867. Zug (1986:98) indicate that Fulbright immigrated into Buncombe County from South Carolina sometime in/during the early 1900s. A potter by training, his appearance into the pottery communities of Jugtown and Big Cove was no coincidence. Where he learned his potter craft remains somewhat unclear. The 1880 census record for Bandy Township in Catawba County, North Carolina, a well-known pottery manufacturing center, suggests one possibility. The records showed a William Fulbright, age 28, occupation farmer, his wife Rebecca, and children, John, 11, Albert, 9, and Linny, 7, living in this pottery community. It is probable, then that Albert received his pottery training in the Catawba Valley area, or the Edgefield District of South Carolina, or both, before settling in Buncombe County.

Table 8
Summary of Artifacts from the Bachelder Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
T.U. 1	29	0	9	18	6	5	0	67
T.U. 2	45	0	25	17	3	4	1	95
T.U. 3	31	0	25	47	11	14	0	128
T.U. 4	15	0	22	49	9	8	0	103
T.U. 5	9	0	1	6	0	7	0	23
T.U. 6	10	0	2	3	0	3	0	18
T.U. 7	0	0	0	3	3	6	0	12
T.U. 8	0	0	1	3	4	11	0	19
T.T. 9	110	0	39	27	7	19	0	202
Surface: Garden	76	3	10	3	3	18	0	113
Surface: E. Bank of Geo. Branch	13	0	8	2	0	1	0	24
Surface: Road Bank	24	1	9	0	0	0	0	34
Surface: General	9	0	4	0	0	2	1	16
Surface: Bank cut for steps	12	0	11	1	4	6	0	34
Total	383	4	166	179	50	104	2	888
Percent	43	1.5	18	20	5	12	0.5	100

T.U. - Test Unit
T.T. - Test Trench

A 1904 land deed (Deed Book 142:5) showed that Albert Fulbright, et al., purchased 17 acres in the Upper Hominy Creek drainage from Benjamin Robert Trull. The site of his property, homeplace, and (possible) pottery shop was located on the north end of Big Cove, south of S.R.#1207. A small unnamed creek passes nearby which drains into Webb's Branch. In 1910, Albert, 43, was listed as a potter living with his wife, Nancy, 43, and their children, Earnest, 18, (born in South Carolina), Walter, 15, Algie, 12, Clarence, 7 and Lillie, 4. He was still a neighbor of the Trulls at this time. Leftwich reports that Albert and his family moved over to Jugtown near the Penlands and later, in 1924, his wife left to live in Washington with her son (Personal communication).

Albert Fulbright was a skilled potter who worked at several potteries in Buncombe County during his lifetime. He is known to have worked at the Trull shop (ca.early 1900s), the Bachelder/Throckmorton pottery (ca.1930s and 1940), and the Rutherford factory (1907 to 1914), and the Stone/Penland place (sporadically on-and-off). As seen in Figure 16, he was also employed at the Brown Pottery shop in Arden between 1941 and 1945 (Charlie Brown, personal communication). Interviews with long-time residents of Big Cove did not confirm whether or not Fulbright had his own shop and kiln on his homeplace.

A pedestrian survey of the property, which was heavily overgrown, did not provide any evidence of possible kiln or shop structure. A surface collection made during the winter months by a local collector yielded a couple of glazed bricks and sherds which suggests that the site may have some archaeological potential. Eight other pottery sites with greater archaeological potential, necessitated giving the Fulbright site a lower priority for testing. Therefore, no archaeological investigations were carried out.

Figure 16. View of Albert Fulbright at work in Brown's Pottery, Arden, 1941. (Photograph courtesy of Charlie Brown)

WEAVERVILLE AREA SETTLEMENT

The town of Weaverville is located nine miles north of Asheville, along the road between Asheville and Burnsville, now called Highway 19-23. Reems Creek, a major tributary, runs east-west, and drains into the French Broad River west of Weaverville. The earliest Anglo-American settlement was situated along Reems Creek valley, south of Hamburg Mountain which also extends east to west. Local history states that Dry Ridge was an early name for Hamburg Mountain but was also used as the name for the first permanent settlement in the area. John and Elizabeth Weaver,and their son Jacob, from Virginia, were the first recorded settlers to establish a home on Dry Ridge in the 1780s. The Weavers had six daughters and four other sons, the descendants of whom settled in the immediate vicinity. The name of the settlement later became Reems Creek and a post office was established there in 1850. By 1872, the town was once again renamed, this time to Weaverville. The name change was in honor of Reverend Montraville Weaver, a benefactor of land and monies to Weaverville College, established in the same year. An early description, states that "in 1874 the town limits extended one-half mile in all directions from J.W. Vandiver's store building, which is now the Feed and Seed Store on Main Street, operated by E.S. Leonard" (Pickens 1962:12). A 1903 map of Weaverville showed a factory located just south of town, a blacksmith shop, a school, and a church, as well as settlements along Reems Creek and north towards Flat Creek.

Five pottery sites are located in the Weaverville area. The Donkel pottery sites are located along Reems Creek, about 1.2 miles east of Weaverville. The Brankton Post Office was located here in 1903, in a store owned by the Brank family (George Donkel's landlord and later, father-in-law). The Cheek pottery site is located about .5 miles north of Weaverville, where the Asheville/Burnsville Highway forks west, and south of Clarks Chapel, (established in the early 1800s). The Lankford pottery site is located 2.3 miles north of Weaverville, on the Asheville/Burnsville Highway, in the Stockville community. The McClure/Yoder site is located in Weaverville, on the north side of Church Street (formerly known as Cherry Street).

THE DONKEL SITES (31Bn381 and 31Bn382)

Historical Investigation for Both Donkel Sites

The Donkel pottery sites (two locations), also known as the Reems Creek Pottery, are probably the most well known of the Weaverville potteries researched during this project. The Donkel Sites, like the Stone/Penland and Bachelder sites, have received some attention from local researchers in recent years. A summary of this information follows. For further information the author refers to the previous work by Zug (1986), Dillingham (1981), Roberts (1989), and Leftwich (1989).

David Montgomery Donkel (born ca. 1866) and George Benton Donkel (born ca. 1869) were the two youngest sons of Dr. Isaac K.

Donkel and his wife Maggie Hill. Three older sons were Lloyd, Lawson, and John. Records show that Maggie Hill was Isaac's second wife. The Donkel family moved from Williamsport, Pennsylvania to the Catawba Valley of North Carolina sometime shortly before 1880. The 1880 census records of Newton Township in Catawba County listed Isaac K. Donkel, age 74, disabled and retired, his wife, Maggie, 50, and sons, Lawson, 18, John, 16, David, 12 and George, 7. The oldest son, Lloyd, resided in Orange County, Florida and managed an orange grove.

While residing in Catawba County, David and George learned the pottery trade. Historical records do not clearly reveal where the Donkel brothers received their pottery training, but their association with Colin Monroe Yoder and S. Levrick Yoder of the Blackburn community offers a possibility. It appears that Levrick Yoder left Catawba County and moved to Weaverville where he joined in business with Seree Wheaton McClure, (McClure/Yoder Jug Factory). Memoirs of Minnie Brank Roberts, George Donkel's sister-in-law, state that the Donkel brothers knew S.L.Yoder and worked at his pottery works in 1897 when they first arrived from Catawba County. Land deeds also revealed that George Donkel owned a town lot in Weaverville, adjacent to the McClure/Yoder pottery site from 1899 until 1902. Deed records showed S.L.Yoder bought two town lots in the same block, one dated 1885 from J.A. Reagan, the other dated 1897 from G.A. Brandt. In 1901 and 1905, Yoder was again listed as selling his town lots to E. Byerly (this connection will be further explored in discussion on the McClure/Yoder site).

The Donkel brothers became familiar with the clay resources of Buncombe County through their travels peddling Catawba Valley pots in Weaverville. Their father, Isaac, and brother, John, died in Catawba County. Later, around 1897, Maggie Donkel and her two sons, George and David, moved to Buncombe County. As soon as was possible, the Donkel brothers made preparations to set up their own pottery shop. A rich source of stoneware clay was discovered along Reems Creek east of Weaverville on the property of R.J. Brank. George and David signed a land lease agreement with Brank on January 1, 1898:

> The contract and agreement made between R.J. Brank, D.M. Donkel, and G.B. Donkel. First R.J. Brank agrees to lease to said Donkel and Bro. the Reems Creek Pottery and the land that is under fense[sic] with it including Clay-bed being two (2) acres more or less for the space of twelve (12) months. Brank agrees to let said Donkel and Bro. have the use and full charge of all on the inside of this boundary named for the space of twelve (12) months and if Donkel and Bro. shall then see cause to quit or not release for longer period, then all machinery, brick of furnace, and lumber bought not being cut from timber on my (Brank) farm belonging to him is movable being theirs. Said Donkel and Bro. agree to pay R.J. Brank twenty four ($24.00)

and all there on. Payments due every six (6) months this the first day of Jan. 1898 to the first of Jan. 1899. D.M.Donkel. G.B. Donkel.

Also the meadow or swamp and stock land on the left of swamp extending to fense[sic] which said Donkel had in corn last year the swamp running on line which I now have wheat sowed through to Buckners line. Said Brank agrees to run a wire fense[sic] around swamp. Donkel and Bro. agrees to R.J. Brank for the same Ten ($10.00) dollars it being in our possession twelve months this Jan. 1st 1898 till Jan. 1st 1899.

G.B. Donkel
D.M. Donkel
R.J. Brank

The reference to Reems Creek Pottery, cited above, and the fact that Donkel had a corn crop on Brank's land the previous year, strongly suggest that the Donkels may have arrived in Buncombe County earlier than 1897, possibly around 1895 (Dillingham, personal communication).

An abandoned log house on Brank's property became the Donkel homeplace. The pottery shop, located on the north side of Reems Creek Road, was "built into the dugout hill behind the house" (Roberts, n.d.). The logs and lumber for the pottery shop had been sawn at Robert Brank's saw mill, located south of the road on Reems Creek.

> Just at the end of the saw mill, George and Dave built a shed where they ground their glass with water power, for glazing of their pottery. They obtained glass for this purpose from stores and building contractors. The kiln for burning the pottery was built in the flat land near to the Reems Creek Road (Roberts, n.d.).

David Donkel married Emma Wagner in 1899 and another room was added to the log house. Shortly thereafter, David and Emma moved to Ellers Cove, where they bought land from Emma's father and built a house. By 1902, David had given up pottery making to become a full-time farmer. The 1902-1903 land release from R.J. Brank had only George's signature. George and his mother continued living on Brank's property under yearly lease agreements. "George built a little store near his kiln, and carried a small line of goods for sale....and served as the Brankton, N.C. post office postmaster" (Roberts, n.d.).

In January 1908 George bought land (3.75 acres) from Rufus Weaver on the south side of Reems Creek Road, and .5 mile west of Brank's place he had been renting. There he built a house, barn, brick kiln, and log pottery shop (Figure 17). He moved all of his pottery equipment to this location and reestablished Reems Creek Pottery. Here his mother died. In 1908 George married Hannah Brank (daughter of R.J. Brank) and in 1910 they had a son named Lawrence. The land George had previously rented was then

Figure 17. View of Reems Creek Pottery in 1917, Donkel Site (Presnell Property). (William Barnhill Collection, Mars Hill College)

deeded to Hannah in 1915. Soon afterwards George built a large frame house on the lot where the old log house had stood and moved their home back down the road to this new house. He rented out the smaller house located on his property but continued to operate the pottery shop at that location until 1936.

A series of black and white photographs of the Reems Creek Pottery and George Donkel were taken in 1917 by a traveling photographer named William Barnhill. Though the shots were obviously "staged", they provided a valuable record of this early cottage industry and more specifically, Donkel's operation (Figures 17, 18 and 19).

Hannah Donkel died in 1918, and a year later George married her cousin, Luanna Bowen, to help raise their son, Lawrence. His second marriage produced no children. Lawrence died of tuberculosis in 1933 at the age of 23. George, stricken with intense grief, gave up making pottery for a while. In 1936, he moved his pottery equipment back to the original location of Reems Creek Pottery. There he built a new kiln and shop several yards east of his first shop, nearer to Reems Creek Road, and southeast of his house. This shop, built of wooden planks, was equipped with two wheels for turning wares. George operated his shop with his nephew by marriage, Talman Kermit Cole ("T.K."), until around 1940. The location of his second shop was sold to T.K.'s father (Donkel's brother-in-law) and later, in 1936, to Milton Presnell. Milton's widow, Edra Presnell remains the current owner of this site. The barn and spring house built by Donkel in 1909 are still standing, but a new brick house was built in 1948 just west of the smaller, frame house Donkel had rented out. George Benton Donkel died on December 31, 1956, one day before his birthday.

Numerous intact pieces of Donkel's pottery were examined and photographed. During partnership with his brother, the Donkels used a "D & D THE BEST" stamp. After David resigned from pottery making, George began using a key impression to mark some of his pieces. Dillingham has hypothesized that the key was used to symbolize the state of Pennsylvania, the Keystone state and Donkel's home (Dillingham, personal communication). Capacity stamps were also used.

Having been trained in the Catawba Valley tradition of alkaline glazed stonewares, the brothers continued to produce two varieties of alkaline glaze; one made with crushed glass, the other with crushed iron ore added. Records of interviews with T.K. Cole specified that prior to 1935, three glazes were used by George; the two alkaline mixtures and albany slip (Leftwich, personal communication). The glass was obtained from Westall Lumber Company and the iron ore from Beech Glen farm in Ellers Cove. Ore and glass were crushed together. The iron ore produced a rich black, glassy glaze and the glass-only mixture was clear to pale green in color. Most vessel forms produced at the shop were basic utilitarian containers. George, a traditional potter to the end, was reluctant to make the transition to "art forms". But with encouragement from T.K., Donkel created a few elaborately decorated and painted terra cotta urns and vases (Figure 20).

Figure 18. View of Reems Creek Pottery in 1917, Donkel Site (Presnell Property). (William Barnhill Collection, Mars Hill College)

Figure 19. View of Reems Creek Pottery in 1917, Donkel Site, (Presnell Property). (William Barnhill Collection, Mars Hill College)

Figure 20. View of terra cotta vase by George Donkel.

THE DONKEL SITE (PRESNELL PROPERTY - 31Bn381)

Archaeological Investigations

This site was the location of Donkel's second pottery which operated between ca. 1908 until 1936. Permission to conduct archaeological investigations was granted by the owner. An on-site interview with Mrs. Presnell on June 8, provided useful data on extant structures, property alterations, and areas of archaeological potential. A large garden occupies the entire northwest corner of the property where the log shop once stood. Judging from Barnhill's photographs, the Presnell house, built in 1948, stands near the kiln and pug mill area. Alfalfa crops covered the bottomland (behind the house lot).

A map base (datum) was set in on the north edge of the lot, parallel to the garden edge. A row of 2x2-foot test units (1-7) were laid in at 10-foot intervals in a north-south alignment and two feet east of the garden (Figure 21). After excavation of these units, two units (8 and 9) were dug in the extreme northwest corner of the garden where no crops were planted. No testing was done in the remaining area of the garden but several surface collections were made after rains.

In the row of test units closest to the garden, two distinct plowzones were exposed. West profiles were recorded in these units (Figure 22). Topsoil was deeper in the units south, downhill. Sterile subsoil was encountered between 1.4 and 1.7 feet below surface. A second row of units (10-15), 15 feet east of the first row, also was excavated. A third row of units (16-21) was placed 15 feet east of the second row.

The units closest to the house yielded numerous glazed brick fragments, remnants of a dismantled kiln. In Test Unit 17A a fired reddish clay feature was encountered 2.7 feet below ground surface. This unit was later expanded into a 5x5-foot unit, (Test Unit 17B), to expose and identify the feature (Figure 23). Over 1100 artifacts, mostly pottery sherds and brick fragments, were recovered from this unit. Excavation revealed a possible side wall of the relict rectangular kiln, however, no intact structural elements remained.

Test Unit 18 was not excavated because of its close proximity to the well and pump. No other units revealed any structural remnants. A total of 20 2x2-foot units, and one 5x5-foot unit were excavated at this site. Fieldwork was concluded on June 25.

Artifact Summary

Table 9 presents a summary of materials excavated and collected from the Donkel site on the Presnell property. Of the total 3,384 artifacts 42% (n=1,423) were Vessel sherds, and 36% (n=1,236) were Architectural Debris such as bricks and window glass fragments. Miscellaneous historic artifacts were abundant (12% or n=409), because the property has been continuously occupied as a residence since the late nineteenth century. By-Products and Residue category consisted of slag, cinders, coal,

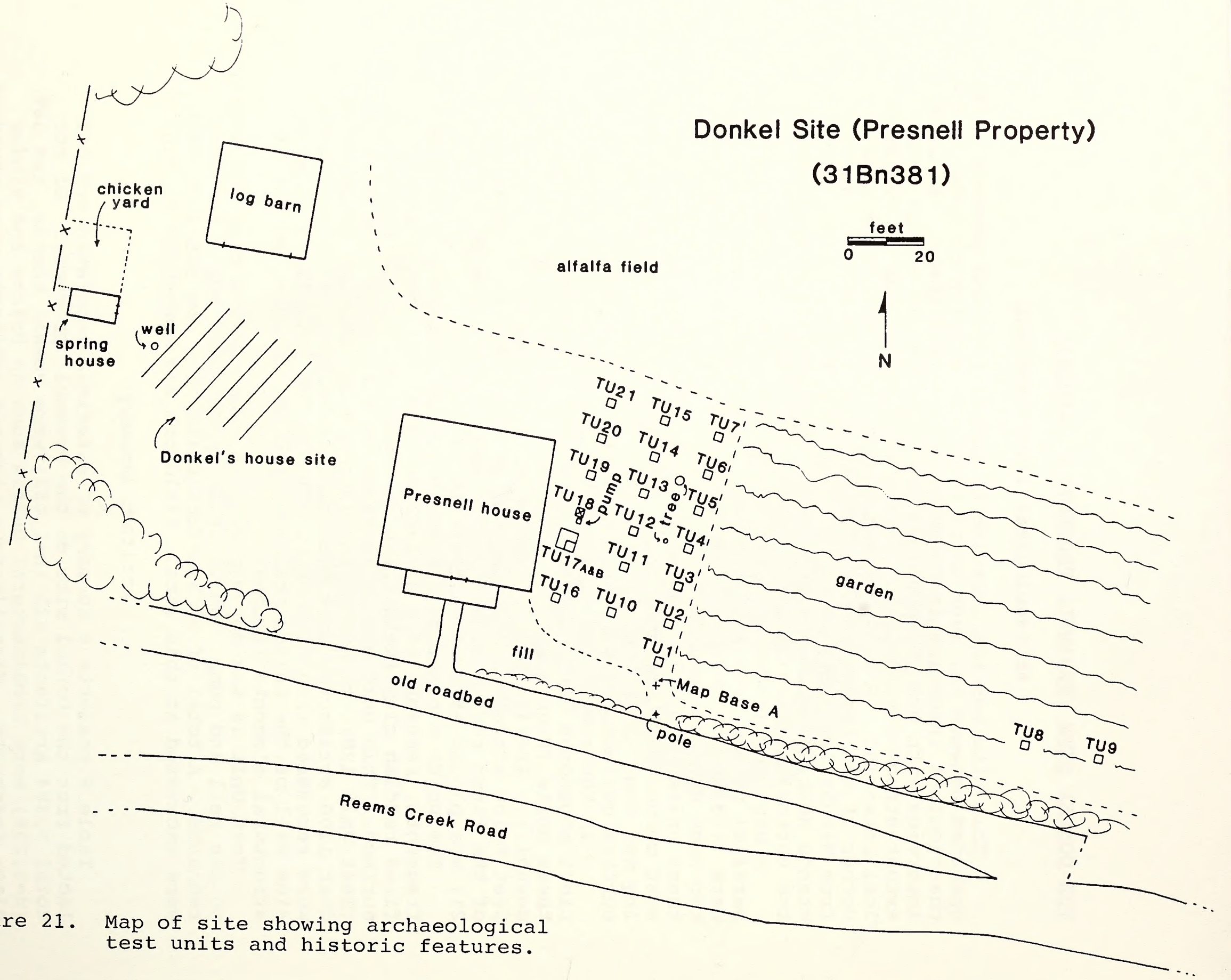

Figure 21. Map of site showing archaeological test units and historic features.

Donkel Site (31Bn381)

Plans and West Profiles

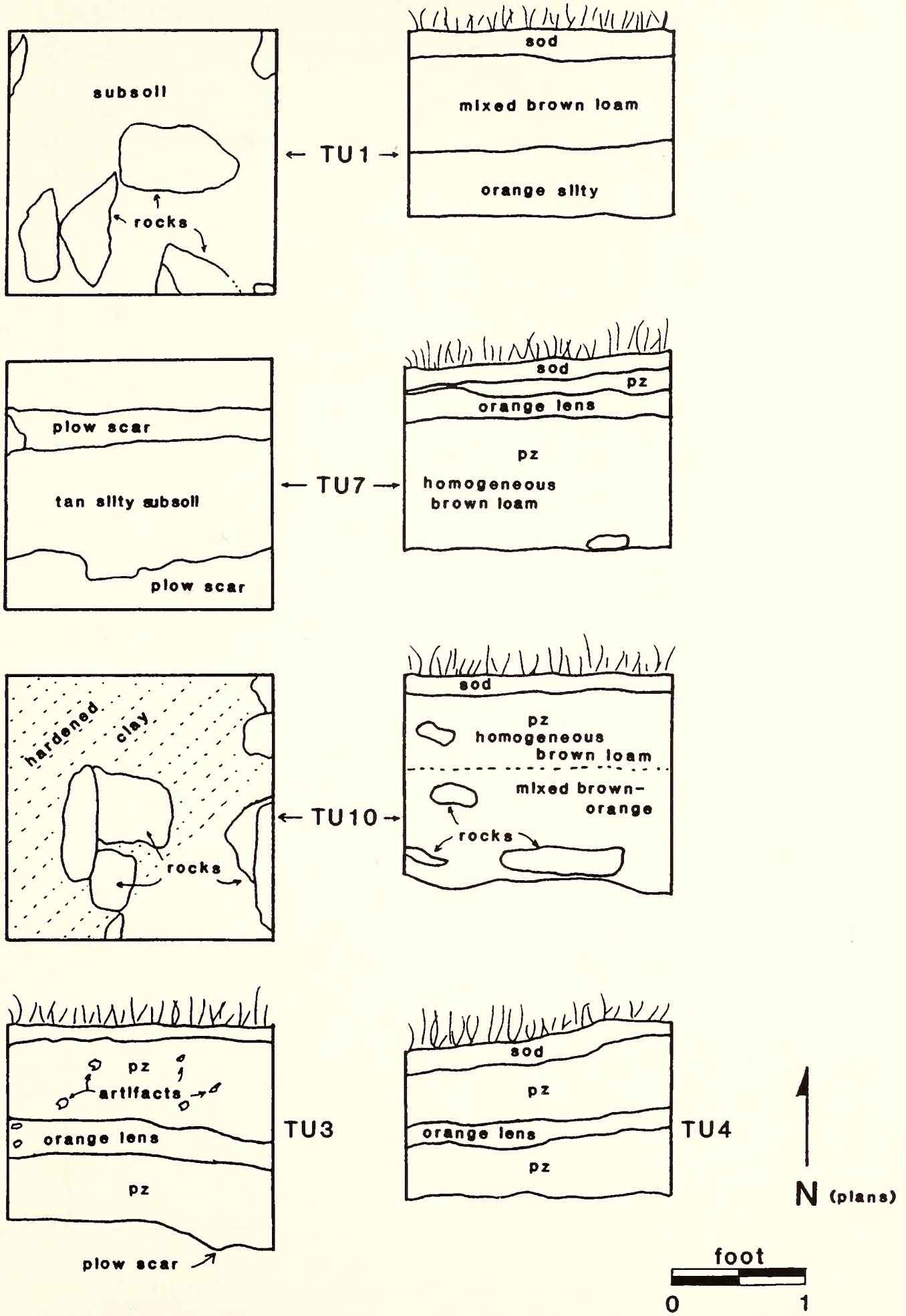

Figure 22. Plans and Profiles of selected test units at the Donkel site in the kiln vicinity.

Donkel Site
(31Bn381)

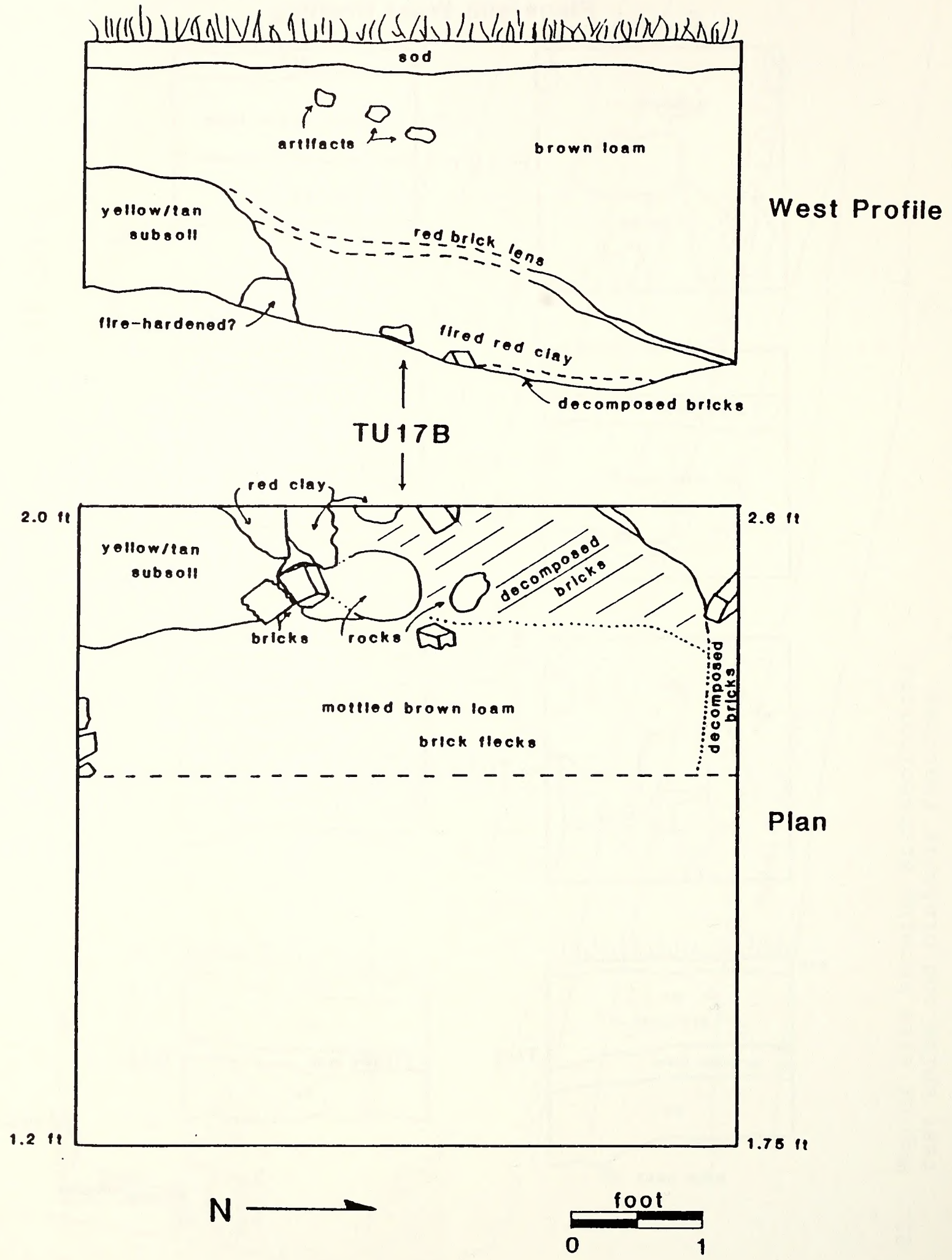

Figure 23. Plan and Profile of Test Unit 17B showing fire-hardened clay and bricks fragments from kiln.

Table 9
Summary of Artifacts from the Donkel (Presnell) Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
T.U. 1	3	0	0	6	8	7	0	24
T.U. 2	13	0	0	22	0	14	0	49
T.U. 3	16	0	0	24	0	9	0	49
T.U. 4	29	0	0	24	3	4	0	60
T.U. 5	32	0	0	8	0	2	1	43
T.U. 6	29	0	0	8	16	11	0	64
T.U. 7	49	0	0	23	8	10	1	91
T.U. 8	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	6
T.U. 9	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
T.U. 10	10	0	0	18	2	0	1	31
T.U. 11	48	0	0	18	1	1	1	69
T.U. 12	34	0	0	50	1	5	0	90
T.U. 13	15	0	0	52	8	5	1	81
T.U. 14	19	0	1	63	2	20	3	108
T.U. 15	12	0	0	31	3	14	3	63
T.U. 16	67	0	1	93	77	22	0	260
T.U. 17A	151	0	0	244	59	40	1	495
T.U. 17B	527	0	2	438	100	105	0	1172
T.U. 18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T.U. 19	8	0	0	40	11	6	0	65
T.U. 20	15	0	0	33	0	48	0	96
T.U. 21	10	0	0	22	0	25	0	57
Surface: Garden	327	0	0	14	0	52	1	394
Surface: Creek Bank	8	0	0	1	0	4	0	13
Total	1423	0	4	1236	299	409	13	3384
Percent	42	0	0.2	36	9	12	0.8	100

from both pottery activities (slag and iron residue) and home-heating sources (coal, clinkers, and cinders). Only four pieces of hand-made kiln furniture (wads/props) were found at the site. This finding suggests that Donkel did not frequently stack wares in the groundhog kiln he used. Several prehistoric lithic artifacts, (i.e., projectile points, cores, bifaces, flakes etc.) were also recovered in the upper plowzones. These items date to the Middle to Late Archaic cultural period.

Of the pottery fragments from the site, the majority were alkaline glazed stoneware. A few albany slipped sherds were noted; interestingly, all of these were overfired. The alkaline glazed sherds also exhibited some evidence of misfiring, both over and under. Three glazed body sherds were found with the key impression (George's mark), and one sherd was marked "..& D..EST" (the partnership mark). Some unglazed earthenware and stoneware fragments were present as well.

A total of 93 rims were analyzed for vessel form variation. Eleven pieces were unglazed, the remainder glazed. Crock rims numbered 61, followed by jars at 19, pitchers at 4, churns at 3, jug tops at 2, and one each of cup, bowl, and canister(?). One rim could not be identified as to form. Jar rims were segregated from crock rims if they had a recessed interior lip for lid placement, and a narrower orifice.

THE DONKEL SITE (CHURCH PROPERTY - 31Bn382)

Archaeological Investigation

The next Donkel site, located half a mile east of the previous Donkel site (31Bn381), is on the north side of Reems Creek Road (S.R.#1003). The property is now owned by the United Missionary Baptist Church. Information received from local residents indicate that this lot was the site of George Donkel's last (third) pottery shop. Its period of operation was from 1936 until ca. 1944. The site of his first shop, of the 1898 to 1907 period, was just west of this lot. It is currently owned by the Hunnicutt family. The lot between these two locations is now the Morris property but was once the rich clay-bed that attracted Donkel to the site.

Landscaping for modern appurtenances appears to have been extensive at the original Donkel homeplace. For this reason archaeological reconnaissance efforts concentrated on the site of his third operation (the Church lot). Fieldwork was conducted on June 22 and 24. After permission was obtained for testing, ten shovel tests were excavated across the site. A site map (Figure 24) was constructed. Datum was located 20 feet north of the road and shovel tests were oriented north-south at 10-foot intervals. Oral information provided by the property owner combined with results of excavation confirmed that subsurface disturbances were extensive. Approximatley two to 2.5 feet of topsoil had been stripped from the site. This lot had later been used as a stockpile for road gravel. More recently, landscaping for the new church had further modified the property. Substrata consisted of compact gravel or red clay fill. A few glazed brick fragments

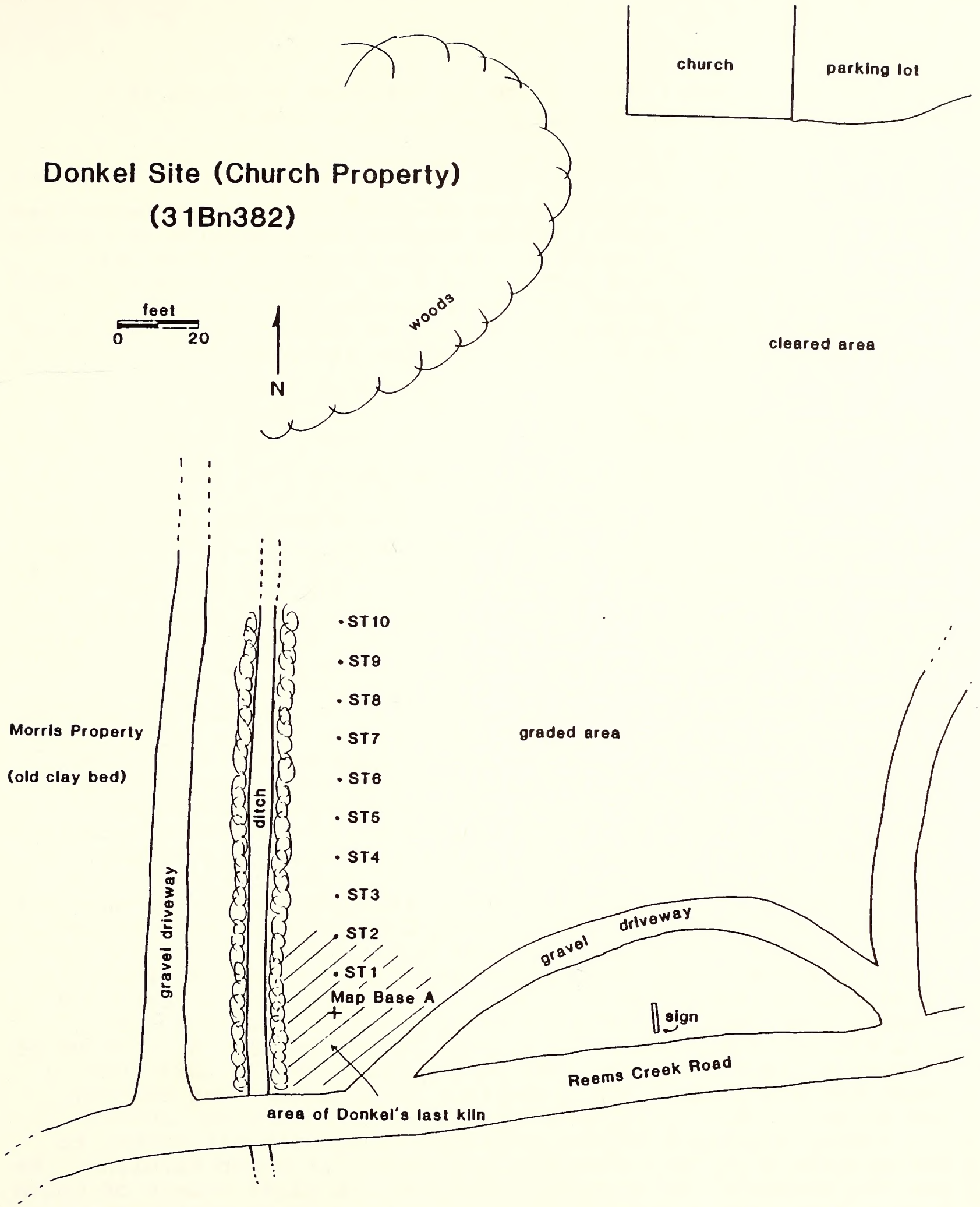

Figure 24. Areal plan of site showing shovel test locations.

were found in shovel tests 4 and 6. No other evidence of a structure was encountered.

Artifact Summary

Test excavations at this site yielded 43 total artifacts (see Table 10). No surface collection was feasible because of recent gravel deposits. Of the total, 86% (n=37) was architectural debris (brick fragments). The bricks were manufactured firebrick and composed of two different clays marbled together. By-Products, Miscellaneous Artifacts, and Lithic categories were represented by single items. No pottery was found.

THE MCCLURE/YODER SITE (31Bn383)

Historical Investigation

The earliest published reference to the McClure/Yoder pottery site came from a local history volume dated 1962 by Nell Pickens and entitled, Dry Ridge: Some of its History, Some of its People. As previously mentioned, Dry Ridge was an earlier name for Weaverville. In this book, under a photo of Wheaton McClure, the author stated that, "The McClures and the Yoders ran a popular jug factory on Church Street from about 1850 to the turn of the century" (Pickens 1962:91). It was further stated that, "Mr.Homer Casto and Mr. E.S. Leonard live on the site of what was a popular and well known Jug Factory started by the McClure and Yoder families nearly a century ago" (Pickens 1962:106). Archival research conducted during this project, and research conducted by previous investigators (Leftwich and Roberts), could not produce any evidence to verify an 1850 to 1860 starting date for this "Jug Factory". A founding date of 1880 is more likely, given the following archival data.

S. Levrick Yoder (born ca. 1829, died post-1900), co-owner of the shop, did not appear in Buncombe County census records until 1900. Property deeds indicate that Yoder bought a town lot fronting Broad Street in Weaverville in 1885 from J.A. Reagan (Deed Book 50:167). In 1897 he purchased another lot from G.H. Brandt (Deed Book 121:334). Finally, in 1901 and 1905, Yoder sold his two town lots to E. Byerly. Clyde Byerly, a relative of E. Byerly, later sold the lots to E.S. Leonard who built the house now standing on the property. In 1971 Miss Sue McElroy, the current owner, purchased the house and lots from Leonard.

Yoder, a skilled potter, migrated along with his mother to Weaverville from the Catawba Valley region of North Carolina. He was the youngest son of Cyrus Yoder and the first cousin of Colin Monroe Yoder (born 1863, died 1953), a well-known potter who operated a shop near Blackburn, Catawba County, North Carolina. It is likely that Levrick received his pottery training at his cousin's shop. The Donkels and the Yoders were probably acquainted or associated with each other prior to their relocation in Buncombe County. How the Yoder and McClure families became associated was not clearly demonstrated in the

Table 10
Summary of Artifacts from the Donkel (Church) Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
S.T. 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.T. 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.T. 3	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
S.T. 4	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	4
S.T. 5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
S.T. 6	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	21
S.T. 7	0	0	0	12	0	1	1	14
S.T. 8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.T. 9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.T. 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	37	2	2	2	43
Percent	0	0	0	86	4.6	4.6	4.6	100

available historical documents. It could be that McClure, like Rutherford, provided the capital and/or property to set up the pottery and then hired Yoder to turn the wares. Moreover, it could not be firmly documented that Wheaton McClure was anything other than a co-owner; he may have been a potter. A familial connection between the two was suggested in the 1900 census record for Reems Creek Township. There S.L. Yoder, age 70, was listed as a "boarder" with Eliza J. McClure, age 48 and head of household (possibly an aunt or older sister of Wheaton). Her residence was on the north side of Weaverville and next to William B. Cheek. The census listed Yoder as a widower, though family accounts say he was a bachelor who died and was buried in Weaverville. No death record has yet been found.

Records of the McClure family appear in Buncombe County, particularly in the Weaverville area, from the 1860s on. Mary E. McClure was Postmistress for Weaverville in 1865. The 1880 census records listed Robert McClure, age 25, as head of household along with his sister, Eliza, 28, a brother, Burns (?), age 31, and Wheaton, age 14. Pickens (1962:91) stated that Wheaton was a student at Weaverville College in the 1880s. In 1891, Wheaton purchased 68 acres of land from Eliza McClure. The following year he bought a town lot in Weaverville from W.C. Lewis (Deed Books 76:231 and 85:349). He was not listed in the 1900 or 1910 county census records; however, local informants stated that "he was born and raised on what is currently North Main Street in Weaverville" (Roberts, n.d.). He died in Madison County, North Carolina in 1960 and was buried in Walnut.

Only one other reference was located regarding this pottery site. The county court minutes of 1893/4 recorded a complaint and ordinance filed ordering the pottery shop owners to "fill in the ditch adjacent to their operation," which had become a public nuisance or hazard (from Leftwich records). Given the historical data reviewed by this researcher and others, a date of operation for the McClure/Yoder "Jug Factory" was probably mid-1880s until circa 1905; a twenty-year-span rather the fifty posited by Pickens. Consequently, little was learned about the types of wares, glazes, or kiln used at this manufacturing site. It appeared no makers stamps were known for these potters or their wares. A single intact jug (which, according to local tradition, was made at this site) was photographed and examined. This specimen is currently property of Dry Ridge Museum.

Archaeological Investigation

Fieldwork began on July 8 and ended on July 13, 1989. The site is located in the rear yard and garden of the McElroy house (formerly owned by Leonard), on the north side of Church Street in Weaverville. An on-site interview with the current owner, age 95, provided useful land title information. Unfortunately, little data regarding site history and modification could be relayed because she did not own the property prior to 1971. A neighbor now living on the old Casto lot, stated that during the 1950s the garden areas of both lots were cleared for cultivation and "truck loads of old brick, pottery and stone were carried off

the site" (Margaret Cooper, personal communication).

Systematic surface collections through the garden rows yielded hundreds of artifacts including pottery sherds, glass, glazed bricks fragments, slag, and abundant domestic-related debris. The garden area, approximately 7980 square feet, covered the central portion of the block (Figure 25). Excavation in the garden area was not possible because of crops. Therefore, test units were laid out in a grid pattern across three adjacent land lots surrounding the garden. Nineteen 2x2-foot units were excavated and a detailed site map constructed. Depths of units ranged from 1.0 to 1.5 feet. Sterile subsoil was a dense red clay. Most units revealed fairly homogeneous and consistent strata across the site. Only sample profiles were drawn.

In Unit 7 a shallow brick pier(?) or footing was exposed (Figure 26). This feature consisted of three brick bats laid horizontally. Several large pieces of window glass were also found associated with this feature. The contiguous bricks could represent a corner footing of a shop or an extension of the extant garage which was later removed. No other intact structural remains were discovered. A few loose fragments of glazed brick came from unit excavation.

Artifact Summary

A total of 1,913 artifacts were recovered from test excavations and surface collections at the McClure/Yoder site. Table 11 presents a summary of those items by seven artifact categories. Vessel fragments comprised 41% (n=487), followed by Miscellaneous Historic with 25% (n=487), Architectural with 20% (n=387), and By-Products with 11% (n=204). Numerous prehistoric artifacts were included in the Lithics category, with 3% (n=52) of the total assemblage. Projectile points of chert and quartz were found at the site along with other knapping debris. These artifacts date from the Late Archaic to Early Woodland cultural periods. Surface collections from the garden represented 49% of the total assemblage while excavation units produced 51%. Test units 1, 12, and 7 each contained more than 100 items. No kiln furniture or non-vessels were found. The lack of kiln furniture suggests stacking of wares in the kiln at this site was uncommon.

From vessel fragments, a total of 71 rims were available for form analysis. Of these, only five were unglazed while all the others were alkaline glazed. No albany slipped pieces were found here. Crock forms with straight rims were the most frequent represented by 37 sherds. Twelve jar rims were present along with six jug tops, four pitcher rims, three unglazed flowerpot rims, and one each of a plate and cup. Seven rims could not be identified as to form. Alkaline glazed sherds exhibited various shades of pale to dark green and a few had rutile present. Rutile (titanium dioxide) occurs naturally in the clays of the region. When fired it turns a bluish color fringed with milky white.

Though no known marks were used by the potter(s) at this site, several body and rim sherds exhibited incised banding, scalloping, or other random lines. These may represent portions

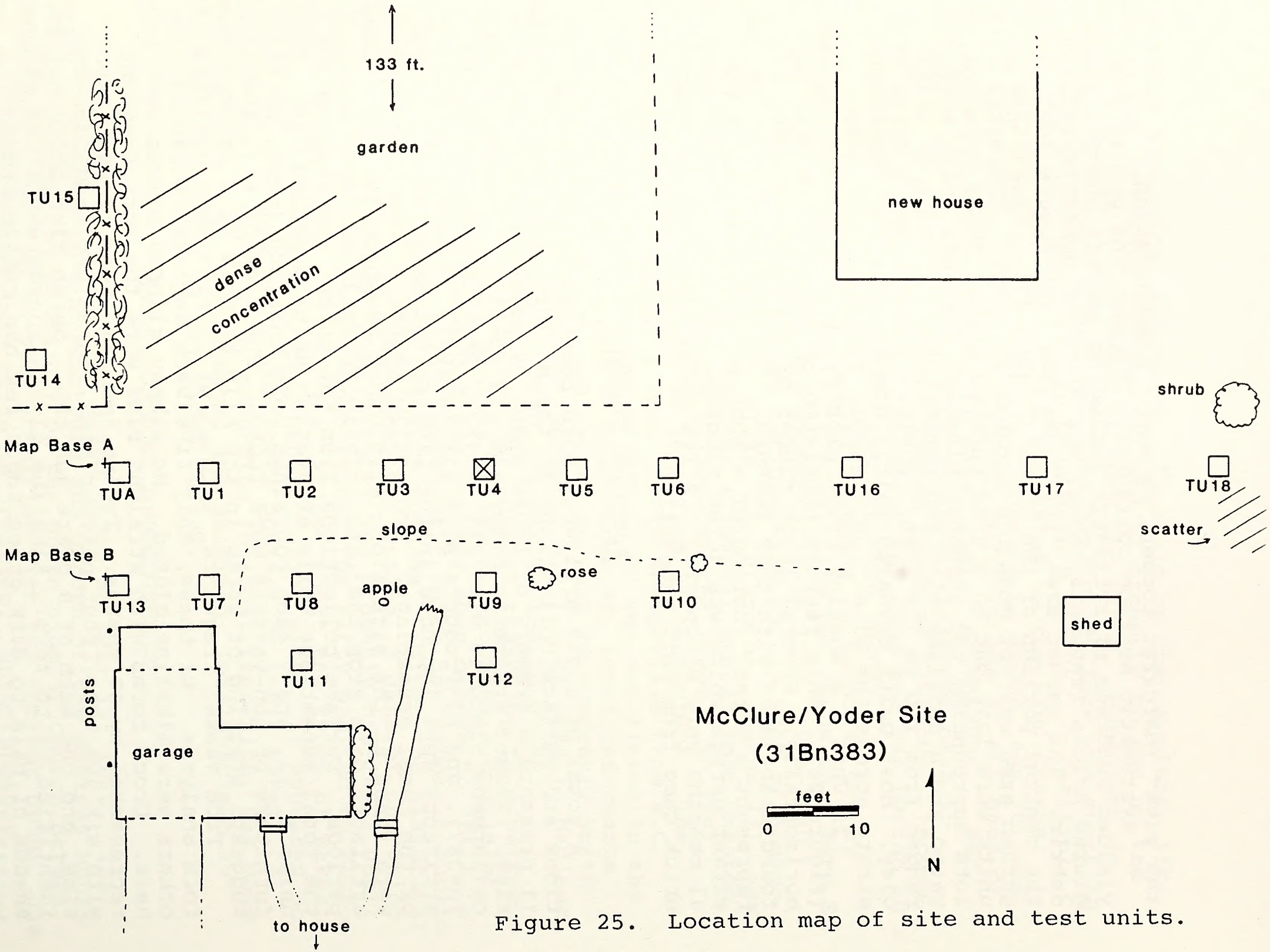

Figure 25. Location map of site and test units.

Figure 26. Plan view of Test Unit 7, McClure/Yoder Site.

Table 11
Summary of Artifacts from the McClure/Yoder Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
T.U. 1	48	0	0	35	9	49	0	141
T.U. 2	8	0	0	9	1	8	2	28
T.U. 3	2	0	0	3	0	2	0	7
T.U. 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T.U. 5	3	0	0	3	0	2	0	8
T.U. 6	11	0	0	12	13	14	3	53
T.U. 7	9	0	0	99	13	11	3	135
T.U. 8	19	0	0	13	7	11	3	53
T.U. 9	15	0	0	30	4	11	0	60
T.U. 10	14	0	0	10	3	9	0	36
T.U. 11	29	0	0	24	10	13	1	77
T.U. 12	9	0	0	76	2	16	5	108
T.U. 13	6	0	0	5	18	20	2	51
T.U. 14	14	0	0	2	2	7	1	26
T.U. 15	3	0	0	2	6	1	0	12
T.U. 16	28	0	0	10	4	6	3	51
T.U. 17	26	0	0	3	7	4	2	42
T.U. 18	9	0	0	5	1	8	1	24
T.U. A	10	0	0	4	39	13	0	66
Surface: Garden	510	0	0	38	65	280	25	918
Surface: Behind Cas-to House	10	0	0	4	0	2	1	17
Total	783	0	0	387	204	487	52	1913
Percent	41	0	0	20	11	25	3	100

of names, marks or decorative motifs. One such sherd from Test Unit 1 appeared to be incised "Yo.." (for Yoder?) near the base. Incised banding on the necks and shoulders of some vessel forms was a common decorative technique used by potters in the Catawba Valley region where Yoder originated.

THE CHEEK SITE (31Bn384)

Historical Information

The Cheek family were early residents of Buncombe County who settled in Weaverville before 1850. William Bishop Cheek, age 29, appeared on the 1850 census record along with his wife, Ann. By 1860 a son named James R., age 1, was listed in W.B. Cheek's household. In 1880, W.B. Cheek's occupation was listed as "tanner", and his son, James R., age 21, was still living at his father's farm. James had married Mary Lankford, age 19, by this time. The records for 1900 showed W.B. Cheek, 76, and James R. Cheek, 41 in two neighboring households. The father was still listed as a tanner and James' occupation was listed as a teamster. Teamsters were wagon owners and operators who made their living by hauling goods. Information from an interview with Lester Cheek, James' son, indicated that his father hauled goods to Madison and Yancey counties. It also was learned that his grandfather, W.B., maintained an apiary in addition to his tannery. Some of the goods hauled by James were honey, wax, tannery products and eventually, pottery.

By 1910 the James Cheek household had increased to eight children. His mother-in-law, Mary Briton, also was living with them. William B. Cheek died in 1910. Sometime prior to the late 1890s, James decided to try his hand at pottery manufacturing. Providing the land and capital, Cheek, who was not a potter, hired his brother-in-law and nephew, Joe and Jeter Lankford to turn wares. The Lankfords were from Stockville, a small community in the Flat Creek area north of Weaverville. Where or from whom the Lankfords learned the pottery trade has not been revealed in historical records. The Lankfords worked at Cheek's for a short while and then departed to set up their own shop near Stockville. Cheek then hired James Henry Stone from Jugtown (in Candler) to turn wares. Leftwich suggested that Finley, James' son who died at the age of 18, may have learned to make pottery from Stone (personal communication). Stone was the last potter to work at the site before it closed around 1911.

The Cheek homeplace, where the pottery was built, is located immediately south of Clarks Chapel just north of Weaverville. The site consists of several acres with remnant gardens, a spring and creek, orchards, and a log house built by William Cheek around 1880. Prior to this project interviews were held with the last owner/occupant of this site, Lester Cheek (born 1898-died 1988). He remembered certain aspects of the pottery operation which provided useful site-specific information (Leftwich, personal communication). There was a groundhog kiln, a hand-turned pug mill, and a spring-operated glass crusher. Clay was hauled

in from the Flat Creek area by wagon loads. Wares were carted away and sold by Cheek. Alkaline glaze, of the crushed glass and iron ore mixture, was primarily used for the stonewares. Cheek could not recall exactly when the shop and kiln were dismantled.

Archaeological Investigation

The site is located south of S.R.#1733, and at the south end of a gravel road which leads up to and beyond Clarks Chapel. A small unnamed creek which drains west into Garrison Branch begins at a spring on the property. An on-site interview was conducted with Lester's brother, James R. Cheek, Jr., from Georgia. Permission was granted for testing, and areas of archaeological potential were inspected.

Fieldwork began on June 25 and concluded on July 7. A pedestrian survey of the abandoned garden and driveway yielded a surface collection of artifacts. A map base, Datum A, was set in east of the house, and south of the driveway, on a small hammock (Figure 27). Because of minimal ground visibility in the grassy front lawn area, shovel tests were laid out at 10-foot intervals extending south and west from datum. Twenty-two shovel tests were excavated to sterile subsoil, ranging from 1.0 to 2.8 feet in depth. An area of artifact concentration (from three shovel tests) was noted immediately south of the gravel driveway near a small maple. Two adjoining 5x5-foot units (test units A and B), and a 2x2-foot unit (Test Unit C) were excavated in this area.

Here a portion of kiln foundation was exposed .7 foot below ground surface. The northern section of this brick wall was four courses in depth and appeared to be slightly curved in alignment (Figure 28). This finding suggests that the kiln may have been circular rather than rectangular in design. Another possibility is that the walls were severely warped from heat, age, ground pressure and/or later alterations which give it a false curved appearance.

The other brick wall remnant extended south from this wall. Its alignment and glaze deposits on the inner surface of the brick suggest a firebox was located here. Typically fireboxes were situated around the perimeter base of circular kilns. Test Unit C was excavated to a depth of two feet. Large tree roots from a nearby maple impeded further excavation units to the west.

The underfired remains of three nearly whole stoneware jars were found adjacent to the intersection of these two wall remnants. One reconstructable crock was marked "J.H.STONE", thus verifying that Stone worked for Cheek at this site. Over thirty pieces of kiln furniture, predominately shelf/slab fragments, were found in test units A and B. Landscaping for a new driveway leading up to the house appears to have destroyed the north half of the kiln. Two coins dating 1959 and 1960 were found in Test Unit A and may coincide with this period of landscaping. Sherd concentrations were excavated in shovel tests 12 and 13, which are probably related to waster piles located adjacent to the kiln. All shovel tests and test units were backfilled and sod replaced.

Finally, an interesting discovery of family history was made

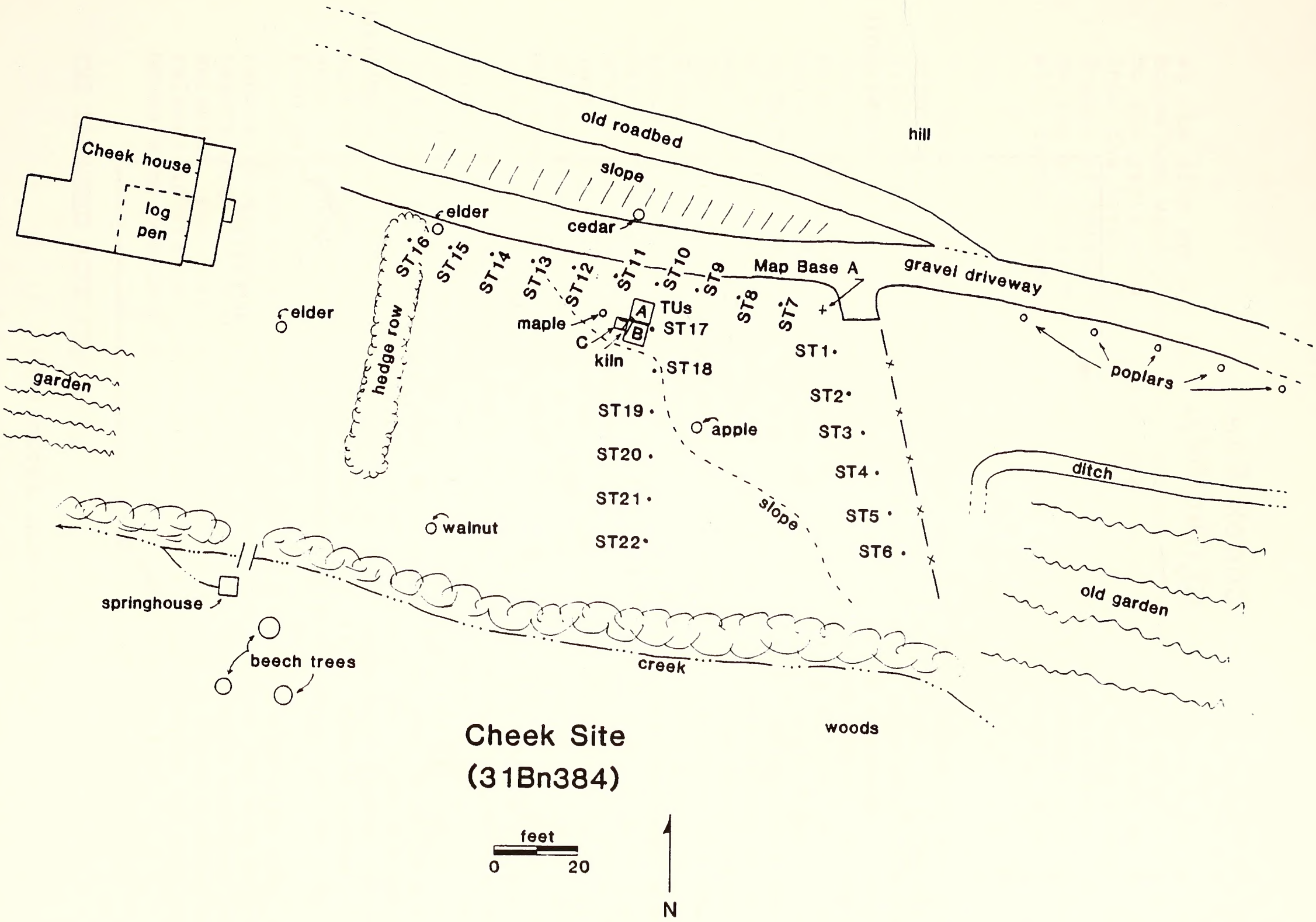

Figure 27. Map of site showing location of shovel tests and test units A, B, and C.

Cheek Site
(31Bn384)

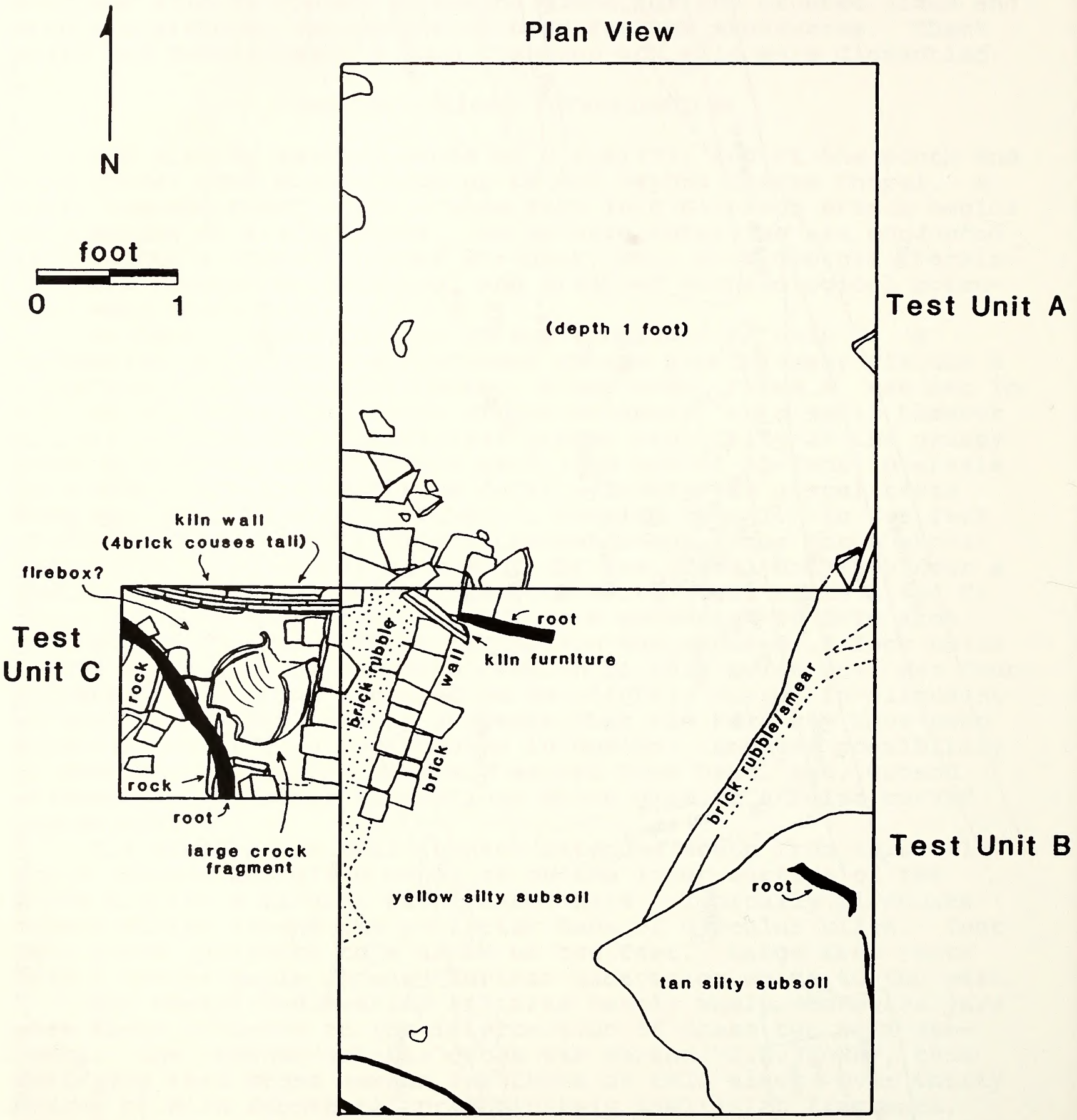

Figure 28. Kiln remains and in situ pots fragments exposed in test unit excavations at the site.

at the site on the last day. In a grove of trees south of the house and uphill from the spring, several large beech trees (150 to 200 years old) were found to have initials and dates carved into the bark. Readable names were Lankfords and Jameson, and dozens of initials. Dates ranged from 1910 up to 1940. This unique archival record provided a special personal connection with former occupants and visitors at this pottery site.

Artifact Summary

Table 12 provides a summary of artifacts found at the Cheek site during excavations and surface collections. A total of 2,583 items were identified and sorted into six artifact classes. Architectural Debris, mostly nails and brick fragments, comprised the largest category with 55% (n=1419) of the total. Pottery fragments numbered 725 or 28%. Shovel tests 12 and 13 and test units A, B, and C contained abundant sherds. All other artifact categories comprised less than 10% combined. Fifty-five pieces of kiln furniture recovered from test unit excavations provide evidence for stacking of wares in the kiln. The shelf/slab forms found here closely resemble those recovered at the Trull and Stone/Penland sites, and were probably made by J.H. Stone. In addition to kiln furniture, glazes and vessel forms were also very similar between these sites. Underfired pieces were much more frequent at the Cheek site, however, and may indicate problems with clay composition, firing temperature, or design defects of the kiln. Capacity and name marks were found on a few sherds. Not unexpectedly, they were identical to those seen on intact pottery pieces made by J.H. Stone at the Stone/Penland site.

Vessel form analysis was done on 64 rims from the collection. Crock forms were the most frequent with 25 rims present. Ten rim sherds were reconstructed into three nearly whole crocks. These crocks were 2 or 3 gallon capacity and all were underfired (Figure 29). Jars and unglazed flowerpots also were frequent, with 11 and 12 rims represented. One flowerpot rim was incised with a date of "189.." found in Test Unit B. Other vessel forms were two cups and one pitcher. Three rims could not be identified as to form.

Surface collection in the garden east of the kiln area, recovered several artifacts dating from early-to-middle nineteenth century (e.g., kaolin pipe stem, creamware and pearlware ceramics, and dark green wine bottle glass). These domestic-related artifacts indicated the nearby location of an earlier house site possibly predating the Cheek occupation.

THE LANKFORD SITE (31Bn385)

Historical Investigation

The Lankford site is located in the Stockville community 2.3 miles north of Weaverville, on the east side of S.R.#2207 (also called the Ashesville/Burnsville Highway). Information from current property owners, and a walk-over inspection of the lot

Table 12
Summary of Artifacts from the Cheek Site

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
S.T. 1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
S.T. 2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	4
S.T. 3	3	0	0	16	0	6	0	25
S.T. 4	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
S.T. 5	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	6
S.T. 6	3	0	0	3	0	1	0	7
S.T. 7	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	6
S.T. 8	3	0	0	2	3	2	0	10
S.T. 9	2	0	0	1	0	0	10	13
S.T. 10	7	0	0	25	25	0	0	57
S.T. 11	6	0	0	39	15	4	1	65
S.T. 12	76	0	2	87	14	0	0	179
S.T. 13	144	0	2	42	5	2	2	197
S.T. 14	33	0	0	12	34	7	1	87
S.T. 15	5	0	0	2	9	2	0	18
S.T. 16	10	0	0	1	10	2	0	23
S.T. 17	10	0	2	16	7	0	0	35
S.T. 18	21	0	5	99	2	2	0	129
S.T. 19	4	0	1	6	0	1	1	13
S.T. 20	8	0	0	7	1	0	0	16
S.T. 21	5	0	0	4	0	0	0	9
T.U. A	142	0	27	477	17	53	3	719
T.U. B	69	0	8	236	35	23	16	387
T.U. C	98	0	1	328	11	2	1	441
Surface: Garden	41	0	5	4	0	16	4	70
Surface: Driveway	10	0	2	4	0	3	0	19
Surface: Garden & Road	3	0	0	2	1	9	0	15
Surface: General	19	0	0	1	1	7	1	29
Total	725	0	55	1419	198	146	40	2583
Percent	28	0	2	55	7	6	2	100

Figure 29. View of reconstructed J.H.STONE crocks from the Cheek Site.
(Maximum height is 15 inches)

quickly revealed that this pottery site and been severely disturbed by recent landscaping and house construction. The potential for archaeological resources was considered minimal. Therefore, this site received the lowest priority of all ten pottery sites researched and no archaeological investigations were conducted. Surface collections made several years ago by a local researcher produced a few glazed kiln bricks and sherds (Leftwich, personal communication). These items were found in an embankment of the neighbor's driveway and may have been intentionally placed there to retard erosion.

Historical information concerning the Lankford pottery was garnered from census records and interviews with family descendants. Joseph Lankford (born 1842) appeared on the 1900 census as a photographer. Included in his household was a sister named Velda. In 1910, Jeter Lankford, age 30 (born 1880), was shown in the residence of Joseph Lankford, age 63. Their co-residence at this time suggests that their pottery was in operation in 1910. When and where the Lankfords learned pottery making could not be determined through available resources. Leftwich (personal communication) stated that they may have worked for George Donkel at Reems Creek Pottery for a while, but this could not be verified from the historical records. The Lankfords may have been trained by J.H. Stone while working at the Cheek pottery.

As previously mentioned, James Cheek's wife was a Lankford, apparently Joseph's sister. The Lankford men worked at the Cheek site before it ceased operation in 1911 or 1912. It appears that by 1910 their own shop in Stockville was operating. Family descendants remember the pottery still in operation prior to WWI (Bailey Lankford, personal communication). A few intact pieces of pottery made at the site, but unmarked, were photographed in private family collections. Double strap handled molasses jars, and jugs of various capacities were popular items made at this shop. The Lankfords used the common iron ore and glass combination alkaline glaze on their stonewares (Figure 30).

Figure 30. View of Lankford molasses jug.

CHAPTER 6
SUMMARY OF ARTIFACTS FROM EIGHT POTTERY SITES

Because the stated purpose of this study involved reconnaissance of primary field data, artifact analysis was limited to a basic level of catalogue description. Nonetheless, the preliminary artifact analysis should provide useful information in addressing National Register eligibility determination and development of research questions.

Investigations at eight Buncombe County pottery sites yielded 11,261 artifacts, of which 42% (n=4,759) were pottery fragments. During field inspections and preliminary analysis a wide range of vessel forms, glaze varieties, and firing defects were observed on the pottery fragments. A summary of all artifacts recovered during this investigation is provided in Table 13. The artifacts were subdivided into seven separate categories based on relevant associations to expedite analysis. The following discussion is a brief description of each category as presented in the Laboratory Methodology portion of this report. The total for each artifact category is shown in the summary table.

Vessels

All recognizable hand-made pottery sherds were classified by vessel attribute or portion (i.e., base, rim, handle, shoulder, body, or lid) and then quantified for each provenience. This was done to isolate diagnostic attributes for vessel form analysis. Unfortunately, analysis of rim sherds from each site was all time permitted. This information was presented with individual site descriptions and will not be repeated here. Attempts were made to correlate these rims with existing pieces of pottery from private collections in order to recognize particular attributes. Crocks (with wide-mouth or flanged rim), jar (with smaller orifices and recesses for lids), churns (with taller collared rim and recesses for lids), pitchers, cups, jugs, flowerpot, bowls, plates, and utilitarian dishes were recognizable forms based on rim analysis. Questionable rims were placed in an unidentifiable category. Glaze variations were described for each site. Generally, alkaline glazed stonewares were the predominant glaze and vessel type.

Alkaline glazes occur on stoneware bodies and are unique to the southeastern United States. The adjective "alkaline" refers to the use of calcined lime or wood ash as fluxing agents to lower the melting point of the glaze. Calcined lime contains calcium, while wood ash contains sodium, potassium, as well as calcium (Zug 1981:32). Alkaline glaze also includes silica, sources of which are sand, clay, quartz, feldspar, iron cinders or crushed glass. To process the glaze, water and clay slips are added to keep the ingredients in suspension for coating the pots.

According to Zug's research, all North Carolina potters appeared to have used wood ashes (rather than lime) as a fluxing agent for their glazes (1981:32). For the potters of Buncombe County and the Catawba Valley, crushed iron ore (or cinders where available) and glass were the preferred silica sources. In

Table 13
Summary of Artifact Categories from
Eight Buncombe County Pottery Sites

Provenience	Vsl	Non-Vsl	Kiln Furn	Archi Deb	By Prod/ Residue	Misc Hist	Lith	Total
Bachelder	383	4	166	179	50	104	2	888
Stone/ Penland	441	0	43	111	36	95	11	737
Trull	641	0	60	85	24	41	23	874
Rutherford	363	23	37	351	16	26	23	839
Donkel (Presnell)	1423	0	4	1236	299	409	13	3384
Donkel (Church)	0	0	0	37	2	2	2	43
Cheek	725	0	55	1419	198	146	40	2583
McClure/ Yoder	783	0	0	387	204	487	52	1913
Total	4759	27	365	3805	829	1310	166	11261
Percent	42	0.5	3	34	7	12	1.5	100

Buncombe County, however, where iron furnaces (and their subsequent residue) were not as frequent as in the Catawba Valley, natural deposits of iron ore were exploited. The iron ore was crushed and substituted for iron cinders. Glass for crushing was obtained from local builders, hardware stores, or collected by potters from surrounding households.

The crushed iron ore glaze typically produced a dark brown to black color and was highly vitreous. The glass glaze variety tended to be clearer, lighter green and smoother in texture. Decoration with slips under the glaze was not practiced by these potters. Rutile (titanium dioxide), which occurs naturally in the clays of this region, was visible on sherds from a few sites in the Weaverville area (McClure/Yoder, Donkel, and Cheek). It was not seen on pieces from the Candler potteries, suggesting that the clays in the two regions vary in composition.

It was difficult to determine if there was a particular tendency toward any one shade or texture of alkaline glaze used by the Buncombe County potters. One reason for this may have been the many factors which effect the coloration of alkaline glazes. Various combinations of glaze ingredients, placement of the wares in the kiln, oxidation or reduction atmosphere in the kiln, paste color of the stoneware, as well as consistency of the glaze mixture when applied (top of the barrel versus bottom sediments) effect the outcome of the glaze. Additional quantitative analysis of pottery sherds from these sites may reveal some glaze preferences or tendencies expressed by the Buncombe County potters.

Slip clay glazes also were recorded for several sites (Rutherford, Bachelder, Stone/Penland, Trull, and Donkel). The presence of this glaze served as a temporal indicator. Popular use of this glaze began around 1910 and was quickly adopted by most of the previously mentioned Buncombe County potters (except Domkel). Earlier sites such as the Cheek or McClure/Yoder were out of business by this time; therefore, the predominant glaze found at these sites was alkaline. George Donkel's use of this glaze was limited even though he continued pottery production until 1940.

The distribution of albany slip glaze found among all the sites surveyed suggests that this glaze was not as popular to potters in the Weaverville area as it was to those in the Candler region. Another possibility may have been that the glaze was not compatible with the clays in the Weaverville deposits and misfirings, like those seen at the Donkel site, were too frequent.

Albany slip was derived from a clay mined along the Hudson River in New York. It was powdered, shipped in bulk, and available through local hardware stores. When mixed with water the glaze produced a creamy solution. Wares were dipped into the mixture, dried and then fired to produce a smooth, chocolate brown to black, opaque glaze. This glaze variety was the predominate glaze used at the Rutherford site. Bachelder perfected this glaze and used it in many variations by adding other coloring agents.

Bristol glaze was a clay slip typically combined with an opacifier (tin oxide) to produce white to light gray glazes. It

was not popular among the Buncombe County potters, and only a few sherds were found at the Bachelder and Rutherford sites.

Morphological analysis of vessel attributes received only brief attention during this phase of research. More extensive analyses would be required to examine variations in rim forms, handle styles, basal treatments, body composition, vessel forms, glazes, and marks/decorations on an intersite and intrasite level. Through this type of analysis, the characteristics of each potter's work could be discerned and identification of unmarked pieces facilitated. Additional research on vessel attributes would enhance existing knowledge of Buncombe County potters and their craft.

Non-Vessels

At the Bachelder and Rutherford sites, several hand-made ceramic fragments were identified as non-vessel forms. Most were unglazed. This category comprised only 0.5% (n=27) of the total assemblage. Ceramic flue thimbles for stove pipes and tile fragments were recognizable, but several oddly-shaped items from the Rutherford site will require additional research for a positive identification (Figure 12).

One functional possibility for the odd-shaped pieces was recently discovered in a museum exhibition catalog edited by John Burrison. This exhibit and catalog featured folk pottery items from Georgia. Shown in this catalog was a similar ceramic object listed as an ant trap. These specialized ceramic dishes were "designed to protect dinner tables from ants: each table leg was placed inside the center circle and the outer ring was filled with water causing the invading ants to perish before climbing the leg" (Burrison 1989:22). The example shown in this text was glazed, however, while none of the specimens from the Rutherford Site were glazed.

Kiln Furniture

This artifact category comprised 3% of the total assemblage with 365 pieces recovered from six sites. No recognizable kiln furniture came from the McClure/Yoder or the Donkel (Church property) sites. The Bachelder site contained the widest variety and greatest quantity of kiln furniture, both in the hand-made and mold-made styles. Kiln furniture is a collective term applied to objects of fired clay used to stack and/or separate the wares in the kiln. Draw trials (or testers) also were included in this category (Figure 11). Only one was found at the Rutherford site.

Expedient, hand-made wads or props of irregularly-shaped fired clay were found at several sites. Typically these were used once and then discarded by the potter. Manufactured, or mold-made shelf/slabs (flat, rectangularly-shaped pieces), used to stack wares, were often recycled several times before discarding. Shelf/slab pieces, all virtually identical in width and shape, were found at the Cheek, Trull, Rutherford, Stone/Penland, and Bachelder sites. The Bachelder pottery site contained small,

mold-made cones and trivets used for stacking tablewares or possibly as art forms.

As Greer has pointed out (1981:220), a high frequency of kiln furniture would not be anticipated on Southern pottery sites where groundhog kilns were employed. Because this kiln design has a low arching vault, most wares were placed on the gravel or sand floor and fired "single shot" fashion. As utilitarian vessel forms became reduced in size (through commercialization) and tablewares or art forms became more frequent, stacking wares in the kiln became a necessary practice. In addition, columns of stacked wares, called bungs, were the most space-efficient way to load a round kiln. Archaeological evidence and historical tradition suggested that round kilns were used at the Bachelder site and possibly the Cheek site.

Architectural Debris

This artifact category represented 34% (n=3,805) of the total assemblage, and was the second most frequent artifact type found. All bricks, glazed and unglazed, were sorted by size, e.g., whole, nearly whole, fragments (any with angular faces), and rubble (no finished surface present). Quantities for each of these size variables were then recorded by provenience for each site. Mortar of all varieties, (clay, sand or cement), glazed or unglazed, were included in this architectural class. Fragments of fused fired clay (possibly floor) were also included. Because architectural elements from pottery shops were also being considered, iron nails (all sizes) and flat window glass fragments were placed in this category. The window glass also could have been used as a glaze ingredient. All sites contained architectural debris. The Donkel (Presnell porperty) site and the Cheek site had the largest amounts (n=1,236 and n=1,419, respectively).

By-Product/Residue

This category included those elements associated with firing processes and kiln debris. It comprised 7% of the total assemblage and consisted of slag, glaze chunks, coal, cinders, and clay samples. Again, all sites investigated contained some of these artifacts, with the heaviest concentrations occurring at the Donkel (Presnell property), McClure/Yoder, and Cheek sites. These artifacts were collected as <u>samples</u> of typical by-products/residues and therefore further quantitative analysis would not be meaningful.

Miscellaneous Historic (Domestic)

In addition to pottery centers, these sites were locations for rural homesteads. Not surprisingly, hundreds of discarded domestic artifacts were found. Refined industrial ceramics, such as pearlware, whiteware, or porcelain, were the remains of tea sets, dishes, and figurines. Some temporal information could be gleaned from these artifacts with datable marks or motifs, if further analysis was conducted. Most ceramics of this type

appeared to date to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, except those from the garden area at the Cheek site, and a single lead glazed earthenware sherd from the Bachelder site. These sherds probably date to the early nineteenth century.

Container glass of all types (e.g., jars, tumblers, bottles, etc.), lamp glass (e.g., shades, globes, or chimneys, etc.) and other glass objects were retrieved during excavations and surface collections. All glass objects of this type were included in Miscellaneous Historic class. All metal objects other than nails, were placed in this artifact class. Bolts, hinges, container fragments, coins, locks, caps, wire, ammunition casings, and any unidentifiable metal pieces were among the metallic items recovered. Animal bones and seeds (e.g., peach pits, nutshells, etc.), probably meal scraps, were also considered in this category.

Every site contained some domestic-related refuse, with the greatest quantity occurring at the Donkel (Presnell property) and McClure/Yoder sites; two sites which have also been continuously occupied and utilized as homesites. Conversely, those pottery sites which reverted to agricultural land, such as the Trull and Rutherford sites, contained the fewest domestic-related artifacts. One exception was the Donkel (church property) site which had most of its topsoil removed prior to this survey and yielded only two artifacts of this category. This group comprised 12% of the total assemblage, or n=1,310 items.

Lithics

This artifact category made up only 1.5% (n=166) of the overall total, and included objects of prehistoric manufacture (i.e., projectile points, bifaces, bannerstones, flakes, cores, and associated debris), and other "interesting" rocks (i.e., ore samples, quartz or quartzite pieces, or other local materials). Lithic material was recovered at each site. Datable prehistoric artifacts (of chert and quartz) came from the McClure/Yoder, Donkel (Presnell), Rutherford, Trull, Cheek, and possibly the Stone/Penland sites. The Late Archaic and Early Woodland cultural periods were represented. Quartzite was often crushed and used to line kiln floors or added to glaze mixtures. Samples of this material were saved from a few sites. Samples of iron ore or hematite were collected where found. Large cobbles and flat stones that may have been used as kiln or shop building elements were not retrieved for analysis but were recorded and left in the field.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary purpose of this research project was to conduct historical and archaeological investigations on selected Buncombe County pottery sites in order to gather sufficient data for determining eligibility of the sites to the National Register of Historic Place (individually and/or as a district category). A number of questions were developed to guide the research orientation of the project and to aid in determinations of significance for each site. This final chapter will provide a brief summary of the project results, an assessment of site significance and recommendations for future research.

In summary, the ten sites investigated clustered in two distinctively clay-rich areas of the county; five sites were located in and around Weaverville, and the other five were situated in the Candler area. Together the sites represent a good sampling of the ceramic tradition of Buncombe County. This tradition began around the mid-1800s and continued into the mid-1900s. Three potteries (Brown's, Evan's, and Pisgah Forest potteries), which began during the 1920s, are still in operation today. Together they reflect continuity of the tradition into the 1980s.

The first production of stoneware probably occurred at the Stone/Penland pottery site (ca. 1840s) and then spread to other locations where stoneware quality clays were discovered. Historical evidence suggests that Edward Stone, a potter from South Carolina, introduced stoneware manufacturing into Buncombe County. Earlier characteristic of this indigenous stoneware tradition included the use of two variations of alkaline glazes (crushed glass and/or iron ore). These glazes were introduced into the region by potters from the Catawba Valley area of North Carolina. These potters then modified the mixtures with locally available resources. The appearance of slip glazes eclipsed alkaline glazes on stoneware bodies at a few of the later twentieth-century manufactories in the county. Finally, changes in vessel forms produced at these potteries also reflected changes in modes of production (from wheel-thrown to mold-made), commercialization, and market demands which beset cottage industries throughout the state prior to WWII.

Assessment of Site Research

In an effort to gather basic data to determine site eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, a series of questions were proposed which formed a research orientation for conducting this project. Answers to a number of the questions were obtained, while others met with only varying success. Recommendations for addressing some of these questions with additional research will be forthcoming. Nonetheless, what is presented in this text provides a valuable first step for future research on Buncombe County pottery sites as well as similar sites in other regions of the state.

The peak of pottery production in Buncombe County occurred somewhat later than in other areas of the state. This factor may

coincide with an overall later migration of settlers into the western mountains after the 1800s. Stoneware production was probably underway in the Catawba Valley and central Piedmont regions by the early 1830s. And by comparison, the earliest known stoneware site in Buncombe County began around 1845 at the Stone/Penland operation. Table 14 provides a chronological summary of production periods for the Buncombe County potteries. In addition, manufacturing of traditional utilitarian pottery seems to have continued longer in this region than in other areas where the production of tourist items caught on quickly (such as the Seagrove region in the central piedmont). Market demands and commercialization in the early 1920s influenced the types, forms, and glazes of wares produced in the Seagrove area. Generally, Buncombe County potters avoided making major changes in production until the 1940s. One exception was Bachelder, who made art forms during the 1920s. His training in pottery, however, was oriented somewhat differently than his rural neighbor potters of Buncombe County. The potters of the Catawba Valley, with one exception (Burlon Craig), ceased major production by WWI and never fully developed a strong tourist market such as the one in Seagrove.

As mentioned above, the introduction of stoneware production in the mountains was probably made by Edward Stone. Stone was an itinerant potter who immigrated from South Carolina during the mid-1840s. Historical records indicate that Stone worked for Thomas Chandler in South Carolina where he probably learned how to make stoneware and alkaline glaze formulas. It seems likely that Stone brought this knowledge with him and modified the South Carolina formulas to comply with the local resources. Further research through detailed chemical and experimental analyses may reveal how and when this early alkaline glaze formula was modified. The crushed glass/iron ore varieties of alkaline glaze most often found on Buncombe County pottery apparently originated from the Catawba Valley potters who migrated into the mountains. These early potters traveled between the two regions to peddle their wares. Several of them eventually settled there. Levrick Yoder, the Donkel brothers, M. Shuford, and perhaps, Albert Fulbright were among these itinerant potters. Bachelder, with his art wares, was clearly part of a national art movement which occurred in the first quarter of the twentieth century and was not strictly a "traditional" potter.

Questions concerning local manifestations of these potters and their wares involved examining their specific attributes in an effort to determine "signatures" for each. This task proved easier for some potters than for others. These observations are limited by the brief artifact analysis and therefore, should be considered preliminary and qualified. Bachelder's work, as previously mentioned, was quite distinct. Donkel's pieces also became easy to recognize except at the McClure/Yoder site where there was a mixing of potters' materials. A closer comparison of these two sites is strongly recommended. Wares from the Stone/Penland and the Trull sites were distinguishable from other sites examined but not from each other. Stone's pieces found at the Cheek site were recognizable, even when unmarked. Wares from

Table 14
Summary of Production Periods for Buncombe County Potteries

Site Number	Shop Name(s)	Period of Production	Owner(s)	Potters/ Workers
31Bn387	Jugtown Wm. Penland & Sons Penland's Pottery Stone/Penland Pottery	c.1845 - c.1950	Penland family William Penland John H. Penland Joseph S. Penland W. Marion Penland Casius W. Penland	Edward Stone James H. Stone William Penland John H. Penland Joseph S. Penland Charles Penland (?) W. Marion Penland Casius W. Penland William Rhodes Francis Devlin William Stone (?) Benjamin R. Trull James O. Trull William Trull Albert Fulbright (?) Issac Matthews
31Bn388	Trull Pottery	c.1895 - c.1905	Benjamin R. Trull	Benjamin R. Trull William Trull James O. Trull Albert Fulbright W. Marion Penland John Devlin
31Bn389	Rutherford Pottery	1907 - 1914	James D. Rutherford	O.L. Bachelder Albert Fulbright James H. Stone Robert Anderson W. Marion Penland James O. Trull
31Bn386	Omar Khayyam Pottery Bachelder Pottery	1916 - 1935, 1938, 1940 - 1941	Robert Gudger/ Oscar Bachelder Oscar Bachelder Christine G. Bates Thomas Throckmorton	Oscar L. Bachelder Ray Welch Eugene Mintz Ned Williams Morris Gudger Paul St. Gaudens Walter Stephens William Soini Converse Harwell Christine G. Bates Thomas Throckmorton Albert Fulbright Ray Penland Roy Stamey
31Bn390	Unknown	Unknown	Albert Fulbright	Albert Fulbright
31Bn381	Reems Creek Pottery (second shop) Donkel (Presnell)	1908 - 1936	George Donkel	George Donkel T.K. Cole Gilbert Baird Joe Lankford (?) Jeter Lankford (?)
31Bn382	Reems Creek Pottery (first and third shop) Donkel (Church)	c.1897 - 1907, c.1936 - 1940	David & George Donkel George Donkel	David Donkel George Donkel T.K. Cole
31Bn383	Jug Factory McClure/Yoder Pottery	c.1880 - c.1905	Wheaton McClure/ Levrick Yoder	Wheaton McClure (?) Levrick Yoder George Donkel David Donkel
31Bn384	Cheek Pottery	c.1899 - c.1911	James Cheek	Joe Lankford Jeter Lankford J.H. Stone Finley Cheek (?)
31Bn385	Lankford Pottery	c.1910 - c.1917	Joe Lankford	Joe Lankford Jeter Lankford

this site were qualitatively different, however, from those at his other shop, the Stone/Penland. This difference may have resulted from the quality of clays which occur in each separate region (Candler versus Weaverville areas).

Additional comparative research of paste and clay types between these two pottery locations may reveal more useful information about this observation. The wares produced at the Rutherford site were all albany slipped but made by a team of potters. The obvious replacement of alkaline glazed by slip glazed stonewares was a useful observation for recognizing temporal changes between and within sites. Analysis of vessel form changes for different potters' wares will require more research than a brief rim inspection can offer. Decorations on the wares were minimal on the sherds recovered through archaeological reconnaissance. Some cobalt accenting over a white slip was noted at the Rutherford site. Several sherds from the McClure/Yoder site were decorated with incised banding or scallops, a technique commonly found on Catawba Valley stonewares.

In describing the physical characteristics of these sites a few observations can be summarized. Only two of the sites were located in agricultural fields (Trull and Rutherford). One site had been recently graded away (Donkel - church property). The remaining seven sites were located in residential areas near homesites, all but one of which (the Fulbright site) are still maintained. Consequently, these sites were all near major roadways or secondary roads with easy access. Most sites were located near some source of water, such as a spring, creek, or small branch, except the McClure/Yoder site in Weaverville. The sites were situated on first terraces or benches, near bottomlands rich with clay deposits, except for the downtown site of McClure/Yoder. It is likely that clay was hauled to this site from some nearby clay deposit, possibly the Reems Creek location which was later purchased by George Donkel.

None of the sites exhibited above-ground evidence of the kiln, shop or other structural features. No distinct waster piles were observed, though sherd concentrations were visible in some garden areas. Research questions related to intrasite and intersite patterning could not be fully realized during this testing project and will, therefore, have to await larger scale excavation or investigation.

Assessment of the historical documentation about these sites formed the third series of research questions. It was important to understand how this data set would interface with the archaeological records for each site. Certain potters and their families, the Donkels, Penlands, and Bachelder, received considerable attention from other researchers prior to this project (e.g., Dillingham 1981, Johnston 1974 and 1983, and Zug 1986). Useful site-specific information was available from these references. Family histories existed for the Trull, Cheek, Lankford and Yoder clans but its usefulness to archaeological site interpretation was limited. Family descendants of the potters were interviewed at the Cheek, Penland, Trull, and Rutherford sites. Once again, information regarding family history was related but site-specific data was variable, except at the Rutherford site. At this

Rutherford site. At this site, Tom Rutherford's recollections helped to pinpoint the buried kiln remains. Interestingly, most informants interviewed had poor memories of the shape, size, and style of the kiln. Wares, shops, and other physical remains from the site were better recalled.

The archaeological record for most of these sites was enhanced by supplemental resources which varied considerably in reliability, accuracy, description, and application. Printed and oral information was combined for the most effective research strategy. Relevant information was then selected from these two sources which could be applied to archaeological site interpretation in the field. First-hand accounts, old photographs, maps, and land deed records proved the most useful categories of site data.

Assessment of Individual Site Significance

This archaeological and historical survey of Buncombe County pottery sites has focused on the temporal and spatial aspects of a cottage industry and its manifestations in the physical and cultural realms. Future research should focus on further exploration of the preliminary information offered in this report. The interrelationships (familial and regional) should be further investigated to determine what collective strategies set these ceramic craftsmen apart from others in their social milieu.

Historical information and archaeological data collected during the survey indicated business and kinship relationships existed between several of the Buncombe County potteries. Some of these interrelationships were reflected in similarities of kiln designs used, wares, forms and glazes produced, and decorative treatments employed. Other questions involving resource competition should be explored. For example, how did the competition for wood between the potters and the lumber companies effect market and production strategies? What other home-produced foodstuffs or commodities (such as honey or moonshine) were sold in tandem with the pottery to increase their market? And finally, how did the ceramic craftsmen sell their wares, by barter or cash exchange, and how did this relate to their status in the community?

Following the National Register eligibility criteria, specifically C. and D., these pottery manufactory sites embody distinctive characteristics of a particular cottage industry dating to the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. They represent the locations of activities performed by master craftsmen and their apprentices in rural, agrarian-based communities. The kiln structures (or remnants of these structures) associated with these ceramic manufactories also represent very specialized building design and construction. The ceramics produced at these pottery sites, remains of which have been archaeologically retrieved, also possess artistic qualities found only among the utilitarian folk potters of the southeastern United States. In addition, these pottery sites, collectively and individually, represent significant components of Buncombe County history during the pre-industrial decades.

Four categories of observation and evaluation are presented which form the basis for assessing site significance and eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. Table 15 provides a summary of the physical evidence for each site. These categories include the nature of ground disturbance, kiln integrity, presence/absence of waster piles, and overall stratigraphic integrity. The results of this study, achieved through historical and archaeologial corroboration, indicate that five of the ten sites researched in Buncombe County should receive further investigations. Two of these five discussed, the McClure/Yoder and Fulbright sites, will require additional research to determine more about their subsurface integrity or possible remains.

Structural remains or significant features were discovered at three sites, the Cheek, the Rutherford, and the Donkel (Presnell) locations. Of these, the Rutherford kiln remains appear to be the least disturbed. Recommendations for further research at these sites is strongly urged. Individually, these three sites could be considered eligible for the National Register. Disturbances of cultural and natural origin have been discussed for each site which clearly effect their individual eligibility potential. Collectively, however, the sites offer potential as a unique historic district which reflect chronological and stylistic ingredients of Buncombe County's folk pottery tradition.

In summary, the sites examined during this survey form an important non-renewable cultural resource in Buncombe County heritage. Furthermore, these sites offer the opportunity to compare and contrast the specific attributes of this cottage industry on a state-wide and regional scale. Preliminary observations of how Buncombe County potteries compare to those in the Catawba Valley and central Piedmont regions of North Carolina and the pottery regions of South Carolina have been offered in this report. Recommendations for a National Register nomination are made to include all the sites researched during this survey.

National Register Significance Recommendations

The Stone/Penland Site (31Bn387) is the earliest documented stoneware pottery manufactory in the county as well as the most continuously operated (see Table 14). Although the kiln appears to have been destroyed through house construction, other areas of the site offer further archaeological research potential. Sherd concentrations in the area of Wallace's garden suggest an abundance of waster debris across this portion of the site. Additional laboratory analysis is also recommended for artifacts recovered from this site. Individually, this site may not be eligible for the National Register but should be included as a contributing element for a historic district nomination.

The Trull Site (31Bn388) has been extensively cultivated over the seven decades since this shop ceased operation. Archaeological testing did not reveal intact structural remains. Artifacts recovered from excavations and surface collections, however, should yield important information regarding this pottery operation. Similarities of wares, glazes, and kiln furniture were noted between this site, the Stone/Penland site, and

Table 15
Summary of Physical Evidence*

Site Name	Distur-bance	Kiln Integrity	Waster Pile	Strati-graphic Integrity	National Register Status
Bachelder (31Bn386)	G	N	S	D	NE
Stone/Penland (31Bn387)	G	N	S	D	NE
Trull (31Bn388)	P	N	S	D	NE
Rutherford (31Bn389)	P	I	S	T	Y
Fulbright (31Bn390)	U	U	O	U	ID
Donkel (Presnell) (31Bn381)	P	M	S	D	Y
Donkel (Church) (31Bn382)	G	N	S	D	NE
McClure/Yoder (31Bn383)	P	N	S	U	ID
Cheek (31Bn384)	G	D	S	T	Y
Lankford (31Bn385)	U	U	O	U	NE

Key:

G - Grading
P - Plowing
E - Erosion
N - Not Found
I - Found Intact
S - Visible on Surface
NE - Not Eligible for Nat. Reg.
ID - Insufficient Data
O - None Visible
T - Intact
M - Minimal
D - Disturbed
U - Unknown
Y - Eligible

* Table format adapted from Castille, et al, 1988

the Rutherford site. For this reason, further comparative analysis is recommended for the Trull site artifacts. This site should also be considered as an important contributing element to the district nomination.

Test excavations at the Rutherford Site (31Bn389) exposed the intact subsurface remains of a rectangular kiln. It also appears to retain the greatest subsurface integrity of all sites surveyed during this project. A more thorough archaeological excavation is recommended for this site. Historical records indicated that this pottery operated as a factory with mechanized equipment and a large labor force, and mass-produced (mold-made) items. Additional analysis of the artifacts (sherds and kiln furniture) found here could provide important comparative information useful for site interpretation. This site is considered individually eligible for inclusion to the National Register.

The ceramics made at Bachelder's Omar Khayyam Pottery (31Bn386) were somewhat different from those produced at the other, more traditional Buncombe County potteries. The site (31Bn386) also contained an abundant variety of kiln furniture. Further analysis of these artifacts could reveal additional information about the transition from utilitarian wares to art forms produced at the site. Extensive historical documentation has already been compiled about O.L. Bachelder and his Omar Khayyam Pottery by Pat Johnston (1974 and 1983). Archaeologically, however, only a small portion of the site appeared to be intact. Nonetheless, the site should be included as an important component to a district nomination.

The Fulbright Site (31Bn390) should be further explored to conclusively determine if a kiln and pottery shop existed at this residential location. Insufficient data prohibit an assessment of National Register significance at this time.

Test excavations at the Donkel (Presnell) Site (31Bn381) revealed a burned clay feature and architectural debris associated with kiln remains. The site represents nearly 30 years of continuous pottery production by George Donkel. Portions of the site, in the garden and yard areas, appear to be partially intact even though plowing has disturbed the upper strata. Early photographic documentation of the pottery operation by William Barnhill in 1917 provides a valuable supplementary data source for further research at this site. This site is considered individually eligible for nomination to the National Register.

The site of Donkels' first and third pottery workshops, located on the church property, (31Bn382), has been nearly destroyed. Several feet of topsoil have been removed and only scant evidence of pottery activity was recovered during testing. Individually, this site is not considered eligible for inclusion to the Register, but should be included as a contributing element in a historic district nomination.

Hundreds of artifacts were surface collected in the garden area at the McClure/Yoder Site (31Bn383). Unfortunately, subsurface testing in this area was temporarily prohibited because of existing crops. The artifacts recovered during testing and surface reconnaissance suggest the possible existence of kiln remains at the site. At present, the site appears to represent

the earliest pottery operation documented for the Weaverville area. Additional archaeological and historical research is strongly recommended for this little-known site. At this time, data are insufficient to determine its National Register significance but it could still be included within a district nomination.

The Cheek Site (31Bn384) is considered eligible for nomination to the Register as an individually significant site. Test excavations revealed the intact subsurface remains of a brick pottery kiln along with dense waster deposits. Subsurface integrity appeared to be relatively good in the yard area where the kiln remains were discovered. Several nearly whole, reconstructable, pottery jars made by J.H. Stone were uncovered near the kiln foundation. Further archaeological work is crucial to conclusively determine the shape and style of this kiln. The fact that Stone (from Candler) and the Lankfords (from Stockville) worked here as potters could be historically significant in documenting how and to what extent potters from the two separate regions exchanged ideas about production, style, composition, or other "trade secrets."

No archaeological testing was conducted at the Lankford Site (31Bn385) because of its severely altered condition due to modern landscaping and house construction. This site should be revisited and additional historical and archaeological data gathered for making an individual eligibility determination. If a thematic nomination is approved for the district, this site should be included.

Conclusions

This survey of archaeological and historical research conducted at pottery sites located within two distinct regions of Buncombe County has focused on the heritage of the potters, the wares they turned and the kilns they burned. From the beginning of frontier settlement in North Carolina up until the twentieth century, pottery shops, or "jugtowns", have concentrated near the essential clay resources. In Buncombe County, however, an abundance of fine clays, wood for fuel, rapidly expanding populations, an economy dominated by small, self-sufficient farms, and a relative isolation from outside markets created ideal conditions for the traditional folk potters in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As demonstrated by this brief examination of a very specialized cottage industry, Buncombe County became a cultural hearth to settlers from various ethnic and regional origins. The tenacity of the folk potters' blended cultural traditions, and the material manifestations of those traditions, will remain the subject of continued historical research and archaeological explorations. Future research on Buncombe County potteries should include efforts to locate those sites referenced in the historical documents but are presently unknown.

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